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NATURAL RELIGION.

IV.

At the outset I drew a distinction between theology and religion. Theology I considered to be the intellectual or scientific knowledge of God, religion the imaginative or sympathetic knowledge of Him. After examining then to what extent theology is modified by the omission of the supernatural source of knowledge, after showing that it is in no way destroyed, since it has always been of the essence of theology to inquire what is the relation of the Universe to human ideals—and this inquiry remains legitimate, necessary, and all-important, whether we appeal to natural or supernatural evidence—I pass on to consider the modification produced by the same omission in religion. With what *feelings* should we regard God contemplated only in Nature?

It will be evident from what was said at the close of the last chapter, that the common impressions about the worship of Nature are quite mistaken. It is vaguely imagined that the worship of Nature is neither more nor less than classical Paganism, and that to adopt it would be to revive the 'golden years' Shelley sings of, to substitute a *Madre Natura* for the Christian Church, and Pan or Apollo for Christ. This is a misconception of precisely the same sort as that which regards Nature as pitiless and inhuman. Let us always remember that Nature, as we are using that most ambiguous of words, is opposed simply to the Supernatural. Sometimes, as I pointed out, it is opposed to man. When

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Paganism is said to be a worship of Nature, the word is used in a third sense, and one somewhat indeterminate. It is opposed rather to civilization. Paganism did not confine itself to the worship of inanimate Nature. It deified, to be sure, the sun and moon, the sky, the morning and evening star, and all the principal phenomena of inanimate Nature. But it worshipped also certain deities who were supposed to preside over human life, powers of birth, marriage, and death, protectors of tribes and cities, powers of war and commerce, powers of the human mind. When we call it Nature-worship therefore we are not using the word Nature simply as opposed to man. But it so happened, we may say quite accidentally, that in its worship of the phenomena of man Paganism paused abruptly. The worshipping disposition in the ancient nations decayed as society advanced; they ceased to increase their Pantheon as human phenomena became known to them. The consequence is that the deities that have to do with human life in Paganism concern only what is most elementary and primitive in human life. To people in the tribal stage Paganism would have seemed to embrace the whole of humanity as well as inanimate Nature. But when nations had left that stage far behind them, when they had devised complicated politics, and invented arts and sciences, Paganism still remained in its old condition. It did not progress, and in the last ages of the ancient world the traditional religions reflected the image of a much simpler time. This in reality

deprived them of all influence except with the rural population, but at the same time it gave them a charm to all those who were influenced by that reaction against civilization and progress which is always going on. The same charm is felt by us when we look back upon Paganism. When we see statues of Pan or Faunus, when we read Homer, we feel the fascination of *naïveté* and simplicity. And to express what we feel we fall back upon the unfortunate and overworked word Nature. We say these old Pagans worshipped Nature, meaning apparently to say that their thoughts and feelings had not been much modified by the influence of thinkers, inventors, systematisers, that in fact their minds were in a child-like state, and had the freshness and joyousness of childhood.

Evidently Nature here is not in any way opposed to the Supernatural. The Supernatural could not enter into any creed more than it entered into the creeds of these so-called worshippers of Nature.

And if the Supernatural were omitted from our present creeds the residuum would not be classical Paganism. It would be something like what Paganism would have been if religious feeling had not been weakened by the growing complication of human life. Had men's minds continued as religious in the age of Aristotle as they were in the days of Homer, it is not difficult to see how Paganism would have developed. The great product of civilization is the development in men's minds of the feeling of justice, duty, and self-sacrifice. These new feelings, then, would have embodied themselves in new deities, or new conceptions of old ones. Paganism in developing would have become moral, and so would have lost all the charm which the moderns, tired of morality, find in it. And in doing so it would not necessarily have given more weight to the Supernatural, and might easily have given less. Notions of duty and morality have no necessary connection with the Supernatural. The worship of God in Nature therefore, the worship of the Being revealed to us by science,

would not be a religion without morality, because however science may repudiate the Supernatural, it cannot repudiate the law of duty. To human beings that have reached a certain social stage, duty is a thing quite as real as the sun and stars, and exciting much deeper feelings. In the sense in which we are using the word duty is a part of Nature. The worship of Nature, therefore, would be no Paganism. It would not be mere animal happiness or æsthetic enjoyment of beauty. It would be far more like Christianity. It would be mainly concerned with questions of right and wrong; it would be in almost as much danger as Christianity of running into excesses of introspection and asceticism.

But now that we are on our guard against this misconception let us go somewhat further back to inquire what the religion of God in Nature will be. The word religion is commonly and conveniently appropriated to the feelings with which we regard God. But those feelings—love, awe, admiration, which together make up religion—are felt in various combinations for human beings, and even for inanimate objects. It is not exclusively but only *par excellence* that religion is directed towards God. When feelings of admiration are very strong they find vent in some act; when they are strong and at the same time serious and permanent, they express themselves in recurring acts, and hence arises ritual and liturgy, and whatever the multitude identifies with religion. But without ritual, religion may exist in its elementary state, and this elementary state of religion is what may be described as *habitual and permanent admiration*.

Religious feeling readily connects itself with the supernatural—"Gern wohnt er unter Feen, Talismanen"—but at the same time, religious feeling can restrain itself, and sometimes even deliberately chooses to restrain itself from all association of the kind. Accordingly whatever the principal object of religious feeling in a particular case may be, of that object there springs up a natural religion and also a supernatural religion. There have been two classes of religions

which have been conspicuous by their difference in the history of mankind. On the one hand there have been the religions which have found their objects of worship principally in the sensible world, in physical phenomena, and in man considered as a physical phenomenon. On the other hand there are the religions which contemplate more what is intellectual and moral. The best example of the former class is classical Paganism, which, as I pointed out, was arrested in its development at the moment when it began to embrace the moral world; to the other class belong Judaism and Christianity. Now both these forms of religion may be found connected with the supernatural and also unconnected with it. Classical Paganism itself was a supernatural religion. The feelings excited in the Greek by the sight of a tree or a fountain did not end where they began, in admiration, delight and love; they passed on into miracle. The natural phenomenon was transformed into a marvellous quasi-human being. But the same feelings aroused in the mind of Wordsworth produced a new religion of Nature not less real or intense than that of the ancients but unconnected with the Supernatural. He worships trees and fountains and flowers for themselves and as they are; if his imagination at times plays with them, he does not mistake the play for earnest. The daisy, after all, is a flower, and it is as a flower that he likes best to worship it. "Let good men feel the soul of Nature and see things as they are." In like manner moral religion has taken two forms. Judaism and Christianity are to a certain extent supernatural religions, but rationalistic forms of both have sprung up in which it has been attempted to preserve the religious principle which is at the bottom of them, discarding the supernatural element with which it is mixed. The worship of Humanity which has been springing up in Europe since the middle of the last century is in a like manner a religion of moral qualities divorced from the supernatural.

If religion readily accepts the super-

natural even when its object is only isolated physical phenomena or human beings, how much more so when its object is God, whether God be regarded as the Cause of the Universe or as the Universe itself considered as a Unity. Our experience of a limited physical phenomenon may be some measure of its powers; the antecedent improbability of its transcending in a particular case the limit which our experience had led us to put upon our conception of it may be very great. But who can place any limits to Nature or to the Universe? We may indeed require rigid proof of whatever transcends our experience, but it is not only Orientals who say that 'with God all things are possible;' the most scientific men are the most willing to admit that our experience is no measure of Nature, and that it is mere ignorance to pronounce *a priori* anything to be impossible. Accordingly those religions which have had for their object the Unity of the Universe, or what we call *par excellence*, God, as distinguished from gods many and lords many, have generally been most lavish of miracle. They have delighted to believe in whatever is most improbable, because by doing so they seemed to show how strongly they realised the greatness of their Divinity. *Credo quia impossibile* is a paradox specially belonging to the religion of God. But on the other hand there is nothing in this religion that requires the miraculous. Those who realize the Infinity and Eternity of Nature most, and who are most prepared to admit that nothing is impossible, may quite well believe at the same time that the laws of Nature are invariable, and may be as sceptical as the most narrow-minded slaves of experience about particular stories of miracle that come before them. Indeed there is perceptible both in Judaism and Christianity along with the fullest and readiest belief in miracle a certain contempt for those who attach much importance to such occasional exceptions to general law. Prophets and apostles and Christ himself believe one and all that God can and does, at His pleasure, suspend ordinary laws; they believe

this as a matter of course, and with a kind of wonder that any one can doubt it; but they hold it rather as a matter of course than as a matter of much importance—though they may hold a particular suspension of law to be very important for the light it throws on the Divine will; and it is evident that the God of their worship is rather the God who habitually maintains His laws than the God who occasionally suspends them. As therefore we found that the physical religion which in Paganism existed along with a belief in the supernatural appeared elsewhere divorced from it, and that the Christian religion of humanity reappeared in modern religions divorced from miracle, so we may expect to find somewhere a purely natural religion of God.

I have before asserted that modern science, however contemptuously it may reject the Supernatural, has nevertheless both a theology and a God. It has a God because it believes in an Infinite and Eternal Being; it has a theology because it believes in the urgent necessity of obeying His laws and in the happiness that comes from doing so. Is it not equally true that it has or may have a religion? If religion be made of love, awe and admiration, is not Nature a proper object of these as well as of scientific study?

It will be said, that the religion of God thus understood is intelligible enough but has no character of its own by which it may be differenced from the physical and moral religions described above. When we admire a flower we are worshipping Nature, but this is Paganism stripped of the Supernatural, or Wordsworthianism. When we admire justice or self-sacrifice in any human being we are again, after the explanation given above, worshipping Nature, but this is Christianity stripped of the Supernatural, or the modern religion of humanity. Now what third kind of religion can there be unless we introduce a third or supernatural order of beings? I answer that the natural religion of God, though closely connected with both of these religions, is nevertheless clearly distinct from them. Its

material is certainly the same; it contemplates the same phenomena and no others, but it contemplates them in a different spirit and for a different purpose. The object which excites its admiration may be as in the former case a tree, a flower, the sky or the sea, but the admiration when aroused goes beyond the object which aroused it and fixes upon a great Unity, more or less strongly realized, in which all things cohere. It is thus that the view which the man of science takes of any natural object differs from that taken by an uneducated man. The admiration of the latter is, as it were, Pagan. It ends in the particular form and colour before it. It sees nothing in the object but the object itself. But the eye of science passes entirely beyond the object and sees the law that works in it; instead of the individual it sees the Kind, and beyond the Kind it sees higher unities in endless scale. What it admires is also in a sense Nature, but it is not Nature as a collective name for natural things, but Nature as the Unity of natural things, or in other words, God. Similar, with feelings less distinct but probably stronger, is the contemplation of Nature in ancient Hebrew poetry, which when it surveys the great phenomena of the world instead of considering each by itself in succession, instinctively collects them under a transcendent Unity. Instead of saying—How spacious the floor of Ocean, how stately the march of the clouds across heaven, how winged the flight of the wind! the Hebrew poet says, *Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.*

We see then that human admiration, when it organizes itself in religion, may take three forms and not two only. Not only may it fix itself almost exclusively upon sensible phenomena and become paganism, or turn away from the sensible world to contemplate moral qualities as in Christianity, but also it may fix itself not upon the phenomena themselves but upon a unity of them. The simplest form of this religion of unity is, I suppose, Moham-

medanism, which not only contemplates unity of the world, but takes scarcely any interest in the phenomena themselves, the unity of which it contemplates. Lost in the idea of the greatness of God it loses its interest in the visible evidences of His greatness; but in most cases this religion of unity is combined with one or both of the other religions. The unity worshipped is not an abstract unity, but a unity either of the physical or of the moral world or of both. In Paganism the physical world is not worshipped simply for itself, but a feeble attempt is made to establish some unity among its phenomena by setting up a supreme Jove over the multitude of deities. In the moral religions the tendency to unity is still stronger, so much so that it may seem wrong to class, as we have done, Judaism and Christianity among religions of humanity rather than religions of God. They are, in fact both at once, and the former at least is primarily a religion of God and only secondarily a religion of humanity. It is because the worship of humanity in them, rather than the worship of Deity, determines their specific character, because they conceive Deity itself as a transcendent humanity, or as united with humanity; it is not because Deity plays a less, but because humanity plays a more prominent part in them that I have chosen to name them rather from humanity than from Deity.

When, therefore, modern systematisers in endeavouring to organise a religion which should exclude the Supernatural, have extracted out of Christianity a religion of humanity, and have rejected as obsolete whatever in it had relation to Deity, they have not been wrong in taking what they have taken, though wrong in leaving what they have left. Deity is found in other religions besides Christianity, and in some religions, *e.g.*, in Islamism, is not a whit less prominent than in Christianity; what is characteristic of the Christian system is its worship of humanity. How great a mistake, nevertheless, is made when it is supposed that Deity ought to be removed out of our religious systems, or that the rejection

of supernaturalism in any way involves the dethronement of Deity or the transference to any other object of the unique devotion due to Him, I shall show immediately; but what I have said about those inferior forms of religion which have not God for their object suggests another observation before we pass to consider the religion of God.

It is surely not to be supposed that every higher form of religion ought to supersede and drive out the lower forms. Such intolerance is no doubt very natural to religious feeling. Religious feeling in its exaltation delights to repeat that worship paid to any but the highest object is sin and is apostasy. This, of course, when we consider it, involves a certain restriction upon the meaning of the word worship. Feelings of admiration and devotion may be of various degrees, and may be excited by various objects. Such feelings may be called by the general name of worship, and we may be said, without offence, to regard an official as worshipful, to worship a wife, to worship heroes. But worship may also be used in a special and technical sense to denote the particular sort of devotion paid to the highest object we recognize, and it is in this sense alone that the word is used when religion forbids worship to be paid to whatever is in any degree worshipful. But churches are often intolerant in pushing this way of speaking beyond bounds. The greatest religious revolution in history is, in the main, simply a reaction against such intolerance, when the right of ideal humanity to receive worship was asserted in the heart of a community devoted to the exclusive worship of Deity. And in modern history there are many evidences of a secret reaction going on against the absorption of that earlier and lower form of religion which I have called physical, by the higher forms. Paganism itself, many think—and why should it not be true?—was too intolerantly put down. It is true that the intolerance of a necessary and beneficent revolution is pardonable, but that is no reason why it should not be repaired in later and

quieter times. The horror of physical nature which belongs to the middle ages has passed away from the modern mind; the iconoclasm which raged against Greek art and heathen learning is no more necessary to Christianity than the hatred of painted windows is to Protestantism. The worship of natural forms has gradually revived. They now receive a secondary and inferior sort of homage, and so much in this respect has the world advanced that there is little danger of any worship we may pay to natural beauty blunting our sense of the higher reverence due to moral goodness, nor, indeed, need there be any fear of such worship hiding from our view or doing anything but reveal with fresh brightness the glory of the Eternal Being whom science shows us to be everywhere present. The three kinds of worship may now, I think, subsist peaceably side by side, and human admiration have its natural play.

It is here to be remarked that Christianity, in this respect, took from the beginning a retrograde direction. Not from anything wrong in its doctrines or its spirit, but from the accident of the particular period and society in which it began. Judaism in its greatest time had not turned away men's thoughts from Nature, but Christianity did so from the beginning. In the mass of literature which Judaism bequeathed to us there is no trace of that monkish horror of nature and of beauty which many modern writers associate with Christianity. But, more than this, there is no trace of any indifference to Nature. Hebrew devotion evidently fed itself mainly upon the contemplation of the visible universe. It is from this source that it draws its inspiration. When a Hebrew poet would remember God he looked up at the sun and moon or watched the movements of the atmosphere: "Fair weather cometh out of the north; with God is terrible majesty." Nor did he look at Nature with the timid, anxiously searching eye of the modern, saying to himself, I think there must be a God because of this or that mark of contrivance or beneficence.

Evil powers, terrible phenomena, strange as we may think it, brought God home to him as much as the brighter side of Nature. "He casteth forth His ice like morsels; who is able to abide His cold?" Those terrible and undeniable facts which are now quoted to prove that there is no God were strongly asserted and marked in His description of God, "Who visiteth the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the fourth generation of them that hate Him." Nowhere in literature is such fire and such enjoyment in the handling of natural objects to be found as in the book of Job. When modern poets with the fullest worship describe nature, they resemble the Hebrew poets rather than the Greek or Roman. Wordsworth's view of the universe is rather Judaic than Hellenic.

It is very unjust to confound the mediæval form of Christianity, as Goethe seems to do, with Christianity itself. There is surely nothing monkish in the earliest form of it. If it had no sympathy with the Hellenic spirit, this was because it was too far removed from it in its associations to be capable of understanding it. In the sayings of Christ Himself, there is distinctly visible the same sympathy with the material universe that breathes in Hebrew prophecy. But something in the state of society or in the spirit of the age and no doubt also the intense preoccupation of the first Christians with moral subjects have produced the result that the New Testament, if we except two or three isolated sentences in the Gospels, is silent about Nature. Christianity appears not averse but indifferent to it. Its earliest literature though often impassioned and rhythmical was still a literature of prose, and the inspiration of Paul or John is never kindled by any meaner subject of contemplation than God or Christ or the Spirit newly poured out upon the Church. It seems to me that nothing ought to be inferred from this about the necessary relation of Christianity towards Nature worship. High poetry is a rare product of the human mind, depending upon many conditions which seldom meet. It may doubtless be

dried up by a religious system not favourable to it, but on the other hand it is not certain that a religion is unfavourable or is not highly favourable to it, which is not of itself sufficient to call it forth. Christianity grew up in an atmosphere which, from causes quite independent of itself, was not suitable to the free growth of the feelings which find their expression in imaginative literature. Poetry—the fact is evidenced in the barbarous style of the Apocalypse—is hampered by the confusion of languages that marks a world-empire. If the Christian Church nurtured no genius like Isaiah or the author of Job, neither did the outer world at the same time produce any genius like Homer or Pindar. If Paganism, which was so essentially Nature worship, was at that time too feeble to yield any new fruits, it need not be presumed that Christianity was averse to rendering a due worship to Nature because its scanty literature is exclusively occupied with the expression of a higher devotion. But it is a misfortune that we can point to no clearer sanction of Nature worship in the original documents of Christianity, because the fact lends countenance to the prejudice that the anti-natural spirit, which, to a great extent, poisoned the influence of the Christian Church upon mankind throughout the middle ages, is the native spirit of Christianity itself.

But let me now, returning, ask the question again, When natural objects have had their due, when virtue and duty have been fully revered, is there no further and higher object of reverence, whose existence we must recognize, even though we believe in nothing supernatural, even though we indulge in no subtle psychological analysis? It is certain that the thought of Deity, which is so natural to man, is not excited only by occasional suspensions of law nor only by secret unaccountable monitions felt in the conscience. It is excited at least as much by law itself as by the suspension of law; it is excited quite as much by looking around as by looking within. It is not at all less certain that it is

quite distinct from the thought of ideal humanity. Linnaeus fell on his knees when he saw the gorse in blossom; Goethe, gazing from the Brocken, said, "Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him?" Kant felt the same awe in looking at the starry heaven as in considering the moral principle; Wordsworth is inspired rather among mountains than among human beings; it was in solitude that Byron felt the same rapture. If there is an exception it is one which proves the rule. Or whence arises the contempt we feel at the modern dictum, that 'the heavens declare no glory but that of Kepler and of Newton?'

Who is there that is not conscious of a feeling of awe when he realizes the greatness of the Universe? When from thinking of this thing and that thing he rises to the thought of the sum and system of things?

But I shall be told that this is mere Pantheism. It is nothing of the kind.

Pantheism asserts that the explanation of Nature is not to be sought out of Nature itself, that the principle or cause of the universe is immanent. On the other hand, the creed called orthodox maintains a cause existing before the Universe and transcendent to it, a personal will which called Nature into being by its fiat. It is possible that the difference between these two doctrines may be as important as it has seemed to the controversialists on either side. But it is a difference which does not affect the religious awe I speak of. That will remain the same, in whichever way we prefer to conceive the Universe. The two theories agree in this, that they give a unity, though a different kind of unity, to the Universe. Now religious feeling is excited by thinking of the Universe as a unity and not merely by the particular form in which we give it unity in our minds.

It is easy to illustrate this. Religion regards the Universe taken together in the same way in which we regard the different minor unities of which it is composed. It speaks of the greatness and majesty of the Universe as it might speak

of the greatness and majesty of a mountain ; the warmer kinds of religion speak of the justice and love visible, or which they believe to exist, in the Universe as we speak of the justice and love of a man. Let us consider then how far the feelings with which we regard a man are affected by the theories we may have about human nature. Some may think the human being consists of body and soul, the soul being separable from the body and destined to survive it, but at the same time revealed to us only through it. This is parallel to the case of those who regard God as distinct from the Universe. Others may consider the human being as one, may think that the distinction of soul and body is baseless, and that the whole phenomenon may be resolved into an aggregate of forces, just as we may regard the Universe as merely a name for the aggregate of forces known to us. No doubt the difference between the two ways of regarding the human being is very important. Still, we do not find that those who regard him in the second way are as if they did not believe in the human being at all. Their feelings towards the human being may be just as lively as if they believed him to have a separable soul. And there may be a third class of people who do not even raise the question, who have no opinion whatever on the controverted point, and whose feelings towards human beings may also be not less lively, or may even be more lively than those of either of the warring parties.

It is, in fact, neither the separable soul of a man, nor yet the body of a man that excites our feelings of respect or dislike, friendship or enmity ; it is the man himself, in other words, it is the unity of all the organs composing him, the single total to which we give that name. Not otherwise is it with the Universe. When we realize it as one we utter the name God, and in doing so we do not pledge ourselves to the doctrine that God is the Universe, nor yet to the doctrine that He is distinct from it.

It will perhaps be said at this point, It is not true that God is the name which most naturally occurs to us when

we think of the system of the Universe. The words Universe or World or Nature express this conception more appropriately. God is the most appropriate name for the distinct, invisible, eternal Cause of the Universe which is supposed in most religions, which is denied in Pantheism, and put aside as beyond the knowledge of the human intellect in Positivism.

The question thus raised is not uninteresting ; only let it be remarked that it is purely a verbal question. We do not alter the nature of the Object of our worship when we alter the name by which we describe it. Whatever feelings it legitimately excites will be excited as much under one name as under another. But undoubtedly if a name can ever be important, the name by which we habitually indicate the Eternal Being will be so. Instinctively we attach so much sacredness to that name that we can scarcely bear that it should give place to another, even if another could be found more appropriate. It is the name God which has acquired everywhere this sacredness ; it is the name God to which poetry and religion cling, and certainly very strong reasons ought to be shown before we can be expected to tear that name from our hearts and replace it by some other hallowed as yet by no associations. But to me it seems, not only that there are no such reasons, but that this name is preferable to the others, as much on account of its appropriateness and convenience as of the associations connected with it. The word Universe does not, I think, convey precisely the thought we wish to convey. It expresses—not indeed etymologically but in usage—the total of things arrived at, as it were, by mere collection or addition. But we are thinking of the unity which all things compose in virtue of the universal presence of the same laws. The word World has also associations which render it unfit for our purpose. In the first place, it has been conveniently adopted to express the very opposite of what we want to express. The artificial, conventional order which societies establish among themselves—an order

unnatural, transitory, and tending to corruption—has been called World, and has been contrasted by poets with Nature and by theologians with God. Even when the word is used without the intention of conveying any such thought, when it is used as a synonym for Universe, it still conveys something a little different from what we have in view. It conveys the notion of a *place* in which we live. It suggests the thought of an immense residence or house, of which the sky is the roof and the earth the floor. But what we desire to express is an infinite Being, with which we are connected indeed, but not merely as a resident is connected with the house he lives in—rather as the part is connected with the whole, or as the member with the body.

Moreover, it is to be observed of both these words that they seem to close the very question we wish to leave open; for they both seem adapted to express only the pantheistic view, both seem implicitly to deny the other view. It is as if we were to insist upon calling the human being by the name Body. The opposite objection cannot be made to the name God: it cannot be said that this name excludes the pantheistic view. The etymology of the word Pantheism is sufficient by itself to prove that it does not. Nor is it solely in connection with the theory opposite to Pantheism that the word God has gained its peculiar sacredness and awfulness. From the Bible itself it is easy to quote pantheistic language—"In whom we live and move and have our being." It would rather seem that both in Judaism and Christianity the word is used for the most part in the sense which I have here proposed to give it. The question of Pantheism seems very much to be left open throughout the Bible. Texts may be quoted on both sides of it, and on both sides alike they would be misquoted, for their language, as others have forcibly urged, is not scientific but practical, or—what on such subjects is the same thing—poetical. It is upon what is common to the two views, not

on what is peculiar to either, that the Bible is built.

It is the word Nature which science, in its traditional aversion to theological language, most willingly adopts. There can be no objection to using it, and on most occasions one would choose it in preference to a word which, no doubt, is too sacred to be introduced unnecessarily—too sacred, in short, to be worked with. Still the word is not satisfactory, as the reader will see by referring to what I have said above of the common mistake made in speaking of the pitilessness of Nature. Nature, as the word has hitherto been used by scientific men, excludes the whole domain of human feeling, will and morality. Nevertheless, in contemplating the relation of the Universe to ourselves and to our destiny, or again in contemplating it as a subject of admiration and worship, the part filled by morality is the more important part of the Universe to us. Our destiny is affected by the society in which we live more than by the natural conditions which surround us, and the moral virtues are higher objects of worship than natural beauty and glory. Accordingly the word Nature suggests but a part, and the less important part, of the idea for which we are seeking an expression. Nature presents herself to us as a goddess of unweariable vigour and unclouded happiness, but without any trouble or any compunction in her eye, without a conscience or a heart. But God, as the word is used by ancient prophets and modern poets—God, if the word have not lost in our ears some of its meaning through the feebleness of the preachers who have undertaken to interpret it, conveys all this beauty and greatness and glory, and conveys besides whatever more awful forces stir within the human heart, whatever binds men in families, and orders them in states. He is the Inspirer of kings, the Revealer of laws, the Reconciler of nations, the Redeemer of labour, the Queller of tyrants, the Reformer of churches, the Guide of the human race towards an unknown goal.

To be continued.

THE CURATE IN CHARGE.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW RECTOR.

THE news which so much disturbed the inhabitants of the rectory at Brentburn was already old news in Oxford, where indeed it was known and decided who Mr. Chester's successor was to be. The august body in whose hands the appointment lay was absolutely unconscious of the existence of Mr. St. John. Several members of it, it is true, were his own contemporaries, and had been his acquaintances in the old days when these very dons themselves traversed their quadrangles with such hopes and fears in respect to the issue of an examination, as the destruction of the world or its salvation would scarcely rouse in them now; but what was it likely they could know about a man who at sixty-five was only a curate? who had never asked for anything, never tried for anything; but had kept himself out of sight and knowledge for a lifetime? Those of them who had a dim recollection that "old St. John" was Chester's curate in charge, naturally thought that he held that precarious and unprofitable place for so long, because of some personal connection with the locality, or preference for it, which he was well off enough to be able to indulge. He had been poor in his youth, but probably his wife had had money, or something had fallen to him. What so likely as that something good should fall by inheritance to a man with such a patrician name? Therefore let nobody blame the dons. They might have been capable (though I don't know whether they would have had any right to exercise their patronage so) of a great act of poetic justice, and might have given to the undistinguished but old member of their college the reward of his long exertions, had they known. But as they did not know, what could

these good men do but allot it to the excellent young Fellow—already the winner of all kinds of honours—who condescended to be willing to accept the humble rectory? Everybody said it was not worth Mildmay's while to shelve himself in an obscure place like Brentburn; that it was a strange thing for him to do; that he would hate it as poor Chester—also an extremely accomplished man and fellow of his college—had done. Gossips—and such beings exist in the most classical places—feared that he must want the money; though some thought he was merely disinclined to let a tolerable small living, not far from town, and in a good county, where there were many "nice families," pass him; but very few people, so far as I am aware, thought of any higher motive which a popular young don could have for such a fancy.

Mr. Mildmay was quite one of the advanced rank of young Oxford men. I have never been able to understand how it was that he continued more or less orthodox, but he had done so by special constitution of mind I suppose, which in some tends to belief as much as in some others it tends to unbelief. He was not one of those uncomfortable people who are always following out "truth" to some bitter end or other, and refusing all compromise. Perhaps he was not so profound as are those troublesome spirits, but he was a great deal happier, and a great deal more agreeable. It is quite possible that some young reader may object to this as a shameful begging of the question whether it is not best to follow "truth" with bosom bare into whatsoever wintry lands that oft-bewildered power may lead. I don't know; some minds have little inclination towards the sombre guesses of science, new or old; and perhaps some may prefer Roger Mildmay for the mere fact that he did not

feel himself to have outgrown Christianity; which, I confess, is my own feeling on the subject. However, if it is any satisfaction to the said young reader, I may as well avow that though nature kept him from being sceptical, that kindly nurse did not hinder him from throwing himself into much semi-intellectual foolishness in other ways. To hear him talk of art was enough to make all the Academy dance with fury, and drive the ordinary learner, however little attached to the Academy, into absolute imbecility; and his rooms were as good as a show, with all the last fantastical delights of the day—more like a museum of china and knick-knacks than rooms to live in. His floors were littered with rugs, over which, in the æsthetic dimness, unwary visitors tumbled; his walls were toned into olive greens or peacock blues, dark enough to have defied all the sunshine of the Indies to light them up. He had few pictures; but his rooms were hung with photographs “taken direct,” and a collection of old china plates, which perhaps in their primitive colours and broad effect “came” better than pictures in the subdued and melancholy light. But why insist upon these details? A great many highly-cultured persons have the same kind of rooms, and Mildmay was something more than a highly-cultured person. All this amused and occupied him very much—for indeed collecting is a very amusing occupation; and when he had found something “really good” in an old curiosity shop, it exhilarated him greatly to bring it home, and find a place for it among his precious stores, and to make it “compose” with the other curiosities around it. As sheer play, I don’t know any play more pleasant; and when he looked round upon the dim world of *objets d’art* that covered all his walls, shelves, and tables, and marked the fine pictorial effect of the one brilliant spot of light which the green shade of his reading-lamp prevented from too great diffusion—when, I say, looking up from his studies, Mr. Mildmay looked round upon all this,

and felt that only very fine taste, and much patient labour, supported by a tolerably well-filled purse, could have brought it all together, and arranged everything into one harmonious whole, there came a glow of gentle satisfaction to the heart of the young don.

But then he sighed. All perfection is melancholy. When you have finally arranged your last acquisition, and look round upon a completeness which, even for the introduction of additional beauty, it seems wicked to disturb, what can you do but sigh? And there was more than this in the breath of melancholy—the long-drawn utterance of an unsatisfied soul in Mildmay’s sigh. After all, a man cannot live for china, for æsthetic arrangement, for furniture, however exquisite; or even for art, when he is merely a critic, commentator, and amateur—not a worker in the same. You may suppose that he was weary of his loneliness; that he wanted a companion, or those domestic joys which are supposed to be so infinitely prized in England. I am sorry to say this was not the case. The class to which Mildmay belongs are rather in the way of scouting domestic joys. A man who makes a goddess of his room, who adores china, and decks his mantelshelf with lace, seldom (in theory) wants a wife, or sighs for a companion of his joys and sorrows. For why? He does not deal much in sorrows or in joys. The deepest delight which can thrill the soul in the discovery of old Worcester or royal Dresden, scarcely reaches to the height of passion; and even if a matchless cup of *Henri Deux* were to be shivered to pieces in your hand, your despair would not appeal to human sympathy as would the loss of a very much commoner piece of flesh and blood. And then young ladies as a class are not, I fear, great in the marks of china, and even in the feminine speciality of lace require years to mellow them into admiration of those archaeological morsels which cannot be worn. Besides, the very aspect of such rooms as those I have indicated (not being bold enough to attempt to describe them) is

inimical to all conjoint and common existence. Solitude is taken for granted in all those dainty arrangements; in the dim air, the dusky walls, the subdued tone. A child in the place, ye heavens! imagination shivers, and dares not contemplate what might follow.

And then Mr. Mildmay had exhausted this delight. I believe his rooms were papered with three different kinds of the choicest paper that ever came out of Mr. Morris's hands. His curtains had been embroidered in the art school of needlework on cloth woven and dyed expressly for him. An ancient piece of lovely Italian tapestry hung over one door, and another was veiled by a glorious bit of eastern work from Damascus or Constantinople. His Italian cabinets were enough to make you faint with envy; his Venice glass—but why should I go on? The rugs which tripped you up as you threaded your way through the delicate artificial twilight were as valuable as had they been woven in gold; and no sooner was it known that Mildmay had accepted a living than all the superior classes in the southern half of England pricked up their ears. Would there be a sale? About a thousand connoisseurs from all parts of the country balanced themselves metaphorically on one foot like Raphael's St. Michael, ready to swoop down at the first note of warning. I am not sure that among railway authorities there were not preparations for a special train.

Mr. Mildmay had got tired of it all. Suddenly in that dainty dimness of high culture it had occurred to him that studies of old art and accumulations of the loveliest furniture were not life. What was life? There are so many that ask that question, and the replies are so feeble. The commonest rendering is that which Faust in sheer disgust of intellectualism plunged into—pleasure; with what results the reader knows. Pleasure in its coarser meaning, in the Faust sense, and in the vulgar sensual sense, was only a disgust to such a man as Roger Mildmay. What could he have done with his fine tastes and

pure habits in the *coulisses* or the casinos? He would only have recoiled with the sickening sensations of physical loathing as well as mental. What then? Should he marry and have a family, which is the virtuous and respectable answer to his question? He had no inclination that way. The woman whom he was to marry had not yet risen on his firmament, and he was not the kind of man to determine on marriage in the abstract, dissociated from any individual. How then was he to know life, and have it? Should he go off into the distant world and travel, and discover new treasures of art in unsuspected places, and bring home his trophies from all quarters of the world? But he had done this so often already that even the idea almost fatigued him. Besides, all these expedients, pleasure, domesticity, travel, would all have been ways of pleasing himself only, and he had already done a great deal to please himself. Life must have something in it surely of sharper, more pungent flavour. It could not be a mere course of ordinary days one succeeding another, marked out by dinners, books, conversations, the same thing over again, never more than an hour of it at a time in a man's possession, nothing in it that could not be foreseen and mapped out. This could not be life. How was he to get at life? He sat and wondered over this problem among his beautiful collections. He had nothing to do, you will say; and yet you can't imagine how busy he was. In short, he was never without something to do. He had edited a Greek play, he had written magazine articles, he had read papers before literary societies, he had delivered lectures. Few, very few, were his unoccupied moments. He knew a great many people in the highest classes of society, and kept up a lively intercourse with the most intelligent, the most cultivated minds of his time. He was, indeed, himself one of the most highly cultured persons of his standing; yet here he sat in the most delightful rooms in his college, sighing for life, life!

What is life? Digging, ploughing, one can understand that; but unfortunately one cannot dig, and "to beg I am ashamed." These familiar words suggested themselves by the merest trick of the ear to his mind unawares. To beg, the Franciscans he had seen in old Italy had not been at all ashamed; neither were the people who now and then penetrated into college rooms with—if not the Franciscan's wallet, or the penitent's rattling money-box—lists of subscriptions with which to beguile the unwary. For what? For hospitals, schools, missions, churches; the grand deduction to be drawn from all this being that there were a great many people in the world, by their own fault or that of others, miserable, sick, ignorant, wicked; and that a great many more people, from good or indifferent motives, on true or on false pretences, were making a great fuss about helping them. This fuss was in a general way annoying, and even revolting to the *dilettanti*, whose object is to see and hear only things that are beautiful, to encourage in themselves and others delightful sensations; but yet when you came to think of it, it could not be denied that the whole system of public charity had a meaning. In some cases a false, foolish, wrong meaning, no doubt; but yet—

If I were to tell you all the fancies that passed through Roger Mildmay's head on the subject, it would require volumes; and many of his thoughts were fantastic enough. The fact that he had taken orders and was the man he was, made it his proper business to teach others; but he would much rather, he thought, have reclaimed waste land, or something of that practical sort. Yes, to reclaim a bit of useless moorland and make it grow oats or even potatoes—that would be something; but then unfortunately the ludicrous side of the matter would come over him. What could he do on his bit of moorland with those white hands of his? Would it not be much more sensible to pay honest wages to some poor honest man out of work and let him do the digging? and then where was Roger Mildmay? still left,

stranded, high and dry, upon the useless ground of his present existence. Such a man in such a self-discussion is as many women are. If he works, what is the good of it? It is to occupy, to please himself, not because the work is necessary to others; indeed, it is taking bread out of the mouths of others to do badly himself that which another man, probably lounging sadly, out of work, and seeing his children starve, would do well. Let him, then, go back to his own profession; and what was he to do? A clergyman must preach, and he did not feel at all at his ease in the pulpit. A clergyman must teach, and his prevailing mood was a desire to learn. A clergyman must care for the poor, and he knew nothing about the poor. The result of all these confused and unsatisfactory reasonings with himself was that when the living of Brentburn was offered to him half in joke, he made a plunge at it, and accepted. "Let us try!" he said to himself. Anything was better than this perplexity. At the worst he could but fail.

Now Mr. St. John, as I have said, was a member of the same college, and had served the parish of Brentburn for twenty years, and what was to Roger Mildmay an adventure, a very doubtful experiment, would have been to him life and living; and next on the list of eligible persons after Mr. Mildmay was the Rev. John Ruffhead, who was very anxious to marry and settle, and was a clergyman's son well trained to his work. Such injustices are everywhere around us; they are nobody's fault, we say—they are the fault of the system; but what system would mend them it is hard to tell. And, on the other hand, perhaps neither Mr. St. John nor Mr. Ruffhead had the same high object before them as Roger had. The old man would have gone on in his gentle routine just as he had done all those years, always kind, soothing the poor folk more than he taught them; the young man would, though sure to do his duty, have thought perhaps more of the future Mrs. Ruff-

head and the settling down, than of any kind of heroic effort to realize life and serve the world. So that on the whole, ideally, my *dilettante* had the highest ideal; though the practical effect of him no one could venture to foretell.

He had decided to accept the living of Brentburn at once, feeling the offer to be a kind of answer of the oracle—for there was a certain heathenism mingling with his Christianity—to his long-smouldering and unexpressed desires; but before concluding formally he went, by the advice of one of his friends, to look at the place, "to see how he would like it." "Like it! do I want to like it?" he said to himself. Must this always be the first question? Was it not rather the first possibility held out to him in the world—of duty, and a real, necessary, and certain work which should not be to please himself? He did not want to like it. Now men of Mildmay's turn of mind are seldom deeply devoted to nature. They admire a fine landscape or fine sunset, no doubt, but it is chiefly for the composition, the effects of light and shade, the combination of colours. In the loveliest country they sigh for picture galleries and fine architecture, and cannot please themselves with the mists and the clouds, the woods and the waters, the warm, sweet, boundless atmosphere itself, in which others find beauty and mystery unceasing. Yet on this occasion a different result took place; although it was contrary to his own principles, when he first came out of the prosaic little railway at Brentburn and saw at his right-hand, one rich cloud of foliage rounding upon another, and all the wealth of princely trees standing up in their battalions under the full warm August sky; and on the other the sweet wild common bursting forth in a purple blaze of heather, all belted and broken with the monastic gloom of the pine-woods and ineffable blue distances of the wilder country—there suddenly fell upon him a love at first sight for this insignificant rural place, which I cannot account for any more than he could. I should be disposed to say

that the scent of the fir-trees went to his head, as it does to mine; but then the very soul within him melted to the great, broad, delicious greenness of shadows in the forest; and the two between them held him in an ecstasy, in that sweet lapse of all sense and thought into which nature sometimes surprises us, when all at once, without any suspicion on our part of what she is about, she throws herself open to us and holds out her tender arms. Mildmay stood in this partial trance, not knowing what he was doing, for—two full minutes; then he picked himself up, slightly ashamed of his ecstasy, and asked his way to the church, and said to himself (as I think Mr. Ruskin says somewhere) that mere nature without art to back her up is little, but that he might indeed permit himself to feel those indescribable sensations if he could look at all this as a background to a beautiful piece of ancient architecture in the shape of a church. Alas, poor Mr. Mildmay! I don't know why it had never been broken to him. Ignorant persons had said "a very nice church," perhaps out of sheer ignorance, perhaps from the commercial point of view that a new church in perfect repair is much more delightful, to a young rector's pocket at least, than the most picturesque old one in perpetual need of restorations. But anyhow, when the church of Brentburn did burst upon him in all its newness, poor Roger put out his hand to the first support he could find, and felt disposed to swoon. The support which he found to lean on was the wooden rail, round a rather nasty duck-pond which lay between two cottages, skirting the garden hedge of one of them. Perhaps it was the odour of this very undelightful feature in the scene that made him feel like fainting, rather than the sight of the church; but he did not think so in the horror of the moment. He who had hoped to see the distant landscape all enhanced and glorified, by looking at it from among the ancestral elms or solemn yew-trees about a venerable village spire, and old grey, mossy

Saxon walls—or beside the lovely tracery of some decorated window with perhaps broken pieces of old glass glimmering out like emeralds and rubies! The church, I have already said, was painfully new; it was in the most perfect good order; the stones might have been scrubbed with scrubbing-brushes that very morning; and, worse than all, it was good Gothic, quite correct and unobjectionable. The poor young don's head drooped upon his breast, his foot slipped on the edge of the duck-pond. Never was a more delicate distress; and yet but for the despairing grasp he gave to the paling, the result might have been grotesque enough.

"Be you poorly, sir?" said old Mrs. Joel, who was standing, as she generally was, at her cottage door.

"No, no, I thank you," said the new rector faintly; "I suppose it is the sun."

"Come in a bit and rest, bless you," said Mrs. Joel; "you do look overcome. It is a bit strong is that water of hot days. Many a one comes to look at our cheuch. There's a power of old cheuches about, and ours is the only one I know of as is new, sir, and sweet and clean—though I says it as shouldn't," said the old woman, smoothing her apron and curtsying with a conscious smile.

"You are the sexton's wife? you have the charge of it?" said Mr. Mildmay.

"Thank my stars! I ain't no man's wife," said Mrs. Joel. "I be old John Joel's widow—and a queer one he was; and the curate he say as I was to keep the place, though there's a deal of jealousy about. I never see in all my born days a jealous place than Brentburn."

"Who is the curate?" asked Mr. Mildmay.

"Bless your soul, sir, he'll be as pleased as Punch to see you. You go up bold to the big door and ask for Mr. St. John; he would always have the hartis-gentlemen and that sort in, to take a cup of tea with him. The Missis didn't hold with it in her time. She had a deal of

pride, though you wouldn't have thought it at first. But since she's dead and gone, Mr. St. John he do have his way; and two pretty young ladies just come from school," said Mrs. Joel with a smirk. She was herself very curious about the stranger, who was evidently not a "hartis-gentleman." "Maybe you was looking for lodgings, like?" she said, after a pause.

"No, no," said Mildmay, with unnecessary explanatoriness; "I was only struck by the church, in passing, and wished to know who was the clergyman—"

"Between ourselves, sir," said Mrs. Joel, approaching closer than was pleasant, for her dinner had been highly seasoned, "I don't know as Mr. St. John is what you call the clergyman. He ain't but the curate, and I do hear as there is a real right clergyman a-coming. But you won't name it, not as coming from me? for I can't say but he's always been a good friend."

"Oh no, I shall not name it. Good morning," cried Mildmay hurriedly. A new church, a horrible duck-pond, an old woman who smelt of onions. He hurried along, scarcely aware in his haste until he arrived in front of it that the house beyond the church was the rectory, his future home.

CHAPTER IX.

THE girls I need not say had been engaged in calculations long and weary during these intervening days. Cicely, who had at once taken possession of all the details of housekeeping, had by this time made a discovery of the most overwhelming character; which was that the curate was in arrears with all the tradespeople in the parish, and that the "books," instead of having the trim appearance she remembered, were full of long lists of things supplied, broken by no safe measure of weeks, but running on from month to month and from year to year, with here and there a melancholy payment "to account" set down against it. Cicely was young and she had no money, and knew

by her own experience how hard it was to make it; and she was overwhelmed by this discovery. She took the books in her lap and crept into the drawing-room beside Mab, who was making a study of the children in the dreary stillness of the afternoon. The two little boys were posed against the big sofa, on the carpet. The young artist had pulled off their shoes and stockings, and, indeed, left very little clothes at all upon Charley, who let her do as she pleased with him without remonstrance, sucking his thumb and gazing at her with his pale blue eyes. Harry had protested, but had to submit to the taking away of his shoes, and now sat gloomily regarding his toes, and trying to keep awake with supernatural lurches and recoveries; Charley, more placid, had dropped off. He had still his thumb in his mouth, his round cheek lying flushed against the cushion, his round white limbs huddled up in a motionless stillness of sleep. Harry sat upright, as upright as possible, and nodded. Mab had got them both outlined on her paper, and was working with great energy and absorption when Cicely came in with the books in her lap. "Oh go away, go away," cried Mab, "whoever you are! Don't disturb them! If you wake them all is lost!"

Cicely stood at the door watching the group. Mab had improvised an easel, she had put on a linen blouse over her black and white muslin dress. She had closed the shutters of two windows, leaving the light from the middle one to fall upon the children. In the cool shade, moving now and then a step backwards to see the effect of her drawing, her light figure, full of purpose and energy, her pretty white hand a little stained with the charcoal with which she was working, she was a picture in herself. Cicely, her eyes very red and heavy—for indeed she had been crying—and the bundle of grocery books in her apron, paused and looked at her sister with a gush of admiration, a sharp pinch of something like envy. Mab could do this which looked like witchcraft, while she could only count, and count, and

cry over these hopeless books. What good would crying do? If she cried her eyes out it would not pay a sixpence. Cicely knew that she had more "sense" than Mab. It was natural. She was nineteen, Mab only eighteen, and a year is so much at that age! But Mab was clever. She could do something which Cicely could not even understand; and she would be able to make money, which Cicely could scarcely hope to do. It was envy, but of a generous kind. Cicely went across the room quite humbly behind backs, not to disturb her sister's work, and sat down by the darkened window, through which a fresh little breeze from the garden was coming in. It distracted her for a moment from her more serious cares to watch the work going on. She thought how pretty Mab looked, lighting up the poetical darkness, working away so vigorously and pleasantly with only that pucker of anxiety in her white forehead, lest her sitters should move. "Oh, quiet, quiet!" she said, almost breathless. "He must not either go to sleep or wake right up, till I have put them in. Roll the ball to him softly, Cicely, quite softly as if he were a kitten." Cicely put away the terrible books and knelt down on the carpet and rolled the big ball, which Mab had been moving with her foot towards little dozing Harry, who watched it with eyes glazing over with sleep. The light and the warmth and the stillness were too much for him. Just as the ball arrived at his soft little pink toes he tumbled over all in a heap, with his head upon Charley. Mab gave a cry of vexation. "But never mind, it was not your fault," she said, to make up for her impatience. And indeed Cicely felt it was rather hard to be blamed.

"After all it does not matter," said Mab. "I have done enough—but I shall never never get them to look like that again. How pretty children are even when they are ugly! What pictures such things make! how anybody can help making pictures all the day long I can't imagine. It is only that you will not try."

"I would try if I had any hope," said Cicely; "I would do anything. Oh, I wonder if there is anything I could do!"

"Why, of course you can teach," said Mab, consoling her, "a great deal better than I can. I get impatient; but you sha'n't teach; I am the brother and you are the sister, and you are to keep my house."

"That was all very well," said Cicely, "so long as there was only us two; but now look," she cried pointing to the two children lying over one another in the light, asleep, "there is *them* — and papa—"

"They are delightful like that," cried Mab starting up; "oh, quick, give me that portfolio with the paper! I must try them again. Just look at all those legs and arms!—and yet they are not a bit pretty in real life," cried Mab in the fervour of her art, making a fine natural distinction.

Cicely handed her all she wanted, and looked on with wondering admiration for a moment; but then she shook her head slightly and sighed. "You live in another world," she said, "you artists. Oh, Mab, I don't want to disturb you, but if you knew how unhappy I am—"

"What is the matter? and why should you be more anxious than papa is?" cried Mab busy with her charcoal. "Don't make yourself unhappy, dear. Things always come right somehow. I think so as well as papa."

"You don't mind either of you so long as you have—Oh, you don't know how bad things are. Mab! we are in debt."

Mab stopped her work, appalled, and looked her sister in the face. This was a terrible word to the two girls, who never had known what it was to have any money. "In debt!" she said.

"Yes, in debt—do you wonder now that I am wretched? I don't know even if papa knows; and now he has lost even the little income he had, and we have given up our situations. Oh, Mab! Mab! think a little; what are we to do?"

Mab let her chalk fall out of her
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hand. She went and knelt down by Cicely's side, and put one soft cheek against another as if that would do any good. "Oh, how can I tell?" she said with tears in her eyes. "I never was any good to think. Is it much—is it very bad? is there anything we can do?"

Cicely shed a few tears over the butcher's book which was uppermost. "If we were staying here for ever," she said, "as we were all foolish enough to think when we came—we might have paid it with a struggle. I should have sent away those two maids, and tried to do everything myself."

"Everything, Cicely?" Mab was as much appalled at the thought of life without a Betsy, as a fine lady would be denuded of her establishment. The want of a maid-of-all-work represents a dreadful coming down in life, almost more than a greater apparent loss does. Her countenance fell, the corners of her mouth took a downward curve, and her pride received a crushing blow. Yet if you consider what Betsy was, the loss was not deadly. But as usual it was not the actual but the sentimental view of the case which struck the girls.

"Yes," said Cicely, with a solemn paleness on her face. She felt the humiliation too. "I shouldn't mind *doing* things," she said, her voice breaking a little; "it is what people will think. Us, a clergyman's daughters! But what is the use even of that?" she cried; "it will do no good now. Papa must leave Brentburn, and we have not a shilling, not a penny now, to pay those things with. I think and think—but I cannot tell what we are to do."

The two clung together in an agony of silence for a moment; how many wringings of the heart have been caused by a little money! and so often those who suffer are not those who are to blame. The ruin that seemed to be involved was unspeakable to the two girls; they did not know what the butcher and the baker might be able to do to them; nor did they know of any way of escape.

"If there was any hope," said Cicely after a pause, "of staying here—I

would go round to them all, and ask them to take pity upon us; to let us begin again paying every week, and wait till we could scrape some money together for what is past. That, I think, would be quite possible, if we were to stay; and we might take pupils—"

"To be sure," cried Mab, relieved, springing up with the easy hope of a sanguine disposition, "and I might get something to do. In the meantime I can finish my drawing. They have not stirred a bit, look, Cicely. They are like two little white statues. It may be a pity that they were ever born, as Aunt Jane says—but they are delightful models. I almost think," Mab went on piously, working with bold and rapid fingers, "that in all this that has happened there must have been a special providence for me."

Cicely looked up with surprise at this speech, but she made no reply. She was too full of thought to see the humour of the suggestion. Mab's art furnished a delightful way of escape for her out of all perplexity; but Cicely could only go back to the butcher's book. "What could we do, I wonder," she said half to herself, for she did not expect any advice from her sister, "about the living? Very likely they don't know anything about poor papa. It may be very highminded never to ask for anything," said poor Cicely, "but then how can we expect that other people will come and thrust bread into our mouths? It is better to ask than to starve. As a matter of fact we cannot starve quietly, because if we are found dead of hunger, there is sure to be a business in the papers, and everything exposed. 'Death, from starvation, of a clergyman's family!' That would make a great deal more fuss than quietly going and asking for something for papa. I am not a bold girl—at least I don't think so," she cried, her soft face growing crimson at the thought, "but I would not mind going to any one, if it was the Head of the College, or the Lord Chancellor, or even the Queen!"

"I wonder," said Mab, "if we met the Queen driving in the forest—as one

does sometimes—whether we might not ask her, as people used to do long ago? I don't think she would mind. Why should she mind? She could not be frightened, or even angry, with two girls."

Cicely shook her head. "The Queen has nothing to do with Brentburn; and why should she be troubled with us any more than any other lady? No! that sort of thing has to be done in a business way," said the elder sister seriously. "If I could find out who was the chief man, the Head of the College—"

They had been so much absorbed that they had not heard any sound outside; and at this moment the door was suddenly thrown open, admitting a flood of cross light, and revealing suddenly the figures of the curate and some one who followed him.

"My dears!" began Mr. St. John, surprised—

"Oh, papa! you have woke them up. You have spoiled my light!" cried Mab, in despair.

Cicely started to her feet, letting the account books tumble on the floor; and the two little boys raised a simultaneous howl of sleepy woe. "Harry wants his tea," they both piped piteously. Mr. Mildmay, whom the curate had met at the gate, looked with a surprise I cannot describe on this extraordinary scene. The white babies in the light had seemed to him at first an exquisite little "composition," which went to his very heart; and the two other figures, half lit up by the stream of unwelcome light from the door, bewildered the young man. Who were they, or what? One indignant, holding her charcoal with artistic energy; the other, startled, gazing at himself with a hostile sentiment, which he could not understand, in her eyes.

"My love," said the gentle curate, "you should not make a studio of the drawing-room." Mr. St. John was not disturbed by the wailing of the little boys, to which, I suppose, he was used. "Cicely, this is Mr. Mildmay, from Oxford, who has come—to look at the

parish," he added, with a gentle sigh. "Let us have tea."

Why did the girl look at him with that paleness of anger in her face? Mr. Mildmay's attention was distracted from the drawing and the artist, who, naturally, would have interested him most, by the gleam of hostility, the resentment and defiance in Cicely's eyes.

"Yes, papa," she said shortly; and with merely an inclination of her head to acknowledge his introduction to her, she took up the children, Charley in one arm, who was half dressed; Harry under the other, whose feet were bare, and carried them out of the room. She had divined the first moment she saw him, a dark figure against the light, who he was; and I cannot describe the bitterness that swelled like a flood through poor Cicely's heart. It was all over, then! There was no further hope, however fantastical, from College, or Chancellor, or Queen! Fantastic, indeed, the hope had been; but Cicely was young, and had been more buoyed up by this delusion, even in her despair, than she was aware of. She felt herself fall down, down into unspeakable depths, and the very heart within her seemed to feel the physical pain of it, lying crushed and sore, throbbing all over with sudden suffering. The passionate force of the shock gave her strength, or I do not think she could have carried the two children away as she did, one in each arm, while the stranger looked on amazed. Little Charley, always peaceable, held her fast round the neck, with his head against her cheek; but Harry, whom she carried under her other arm, lifted his head a little from that horizontal position, and kept up his melancholy whine. She was not fond of the children; how could she be? and I think would gladly have "given them a shake" in the excitement and misery of her feelings. It was so hard upon the girl, that I think she might be forgiven for feeling that thus her young arms were to be hampered all her life; and, meanwhile, she felt that her father and sister would be perfectly amiable to the stranger,

who was about to supplant them, and turn them out of their house. This, I am afraid, exasperated Cicely as much as anything else. "These two" would have no *arrière pensée*; they would be perfectly kind to him, as though he were acting the part of their best friend.

And, indeed, this was how it turned out. When she went back, having disposed of the children, to make the tea, Cicely found Mab and Mr. Mildmay in great amity over the uncompleted drawing. He had been criticising, but he had been praising as well; and Mab was flushed with pleasure and interest. She ran off laughing, to take off her blouse and wash her hands, when Cicely came in, and the elder sister, who felt that her eyes were still red, felt at the same time that her ungenial and constrained reception of him had struck the new-comer. She went and gathered up the account-books from the floor with a sigh. Despair was in her heart. How could she talk and smile as the others had been doing? As for Mr. St. John, he was as pleased with his visitor as if he had brought him something, instead of taking all hope from him. It was rarely the good man saw any but heavy parish people—the rural souls with whom indeed he was friendly, but who had nothing to say to him except about their crops and local gossip. The gossip of Oxford was much sweeter to his ears. He liked to tell of the aspect of things "in my time," as I suppose we all do; and how different this and that was now-a-days. "I knew him when he was a curate like myself," he said, with a soft sigh, talking of the dean, that lofty dignitary. "We were at school together, and I used to be the better man;" and this was spoken of the vice-chancellor himself; and he enjoyed and wondered to hear of all their grandeurs. He had met Mildmay on the road, looking through the gate at the rectory, and had addressed him in his suave old-world way as a stranger. Then they had talked of the church, that most natural of subjects between two clergymen; and then, half reluctantly, half with a sense of compulsion, the

stranger had told him who he was. Mr. St. John, though he was poor, had all the hospitable instincts of a prince. He insisted that his new acquaintance should come in and see the house, and hear about everything. He would have given the same invitation, he said afterwards, to any probable new resident in the parish, and why not to the new rector? for in Mr. St. John's mind there was no gall.

But to describe Mildmay's feelings when he was suddenly introduced into this novel world is more difficult. He was taken entirely by surprise. He did not know anything about the curate in charge. If he thought of his predecessor at all it was the late rector he thought of, who had died on the shores of the Bay of Naples after a life-long banishment from England. He could understand all that; to go away altogether after art, antiquity, Pompeii, classic editings, and æsthetic delights was perfectly comprehensible to the young Oxford man. But this—what was this? The old man before him, so gentle, so suave, so smiling, his own inferior in position, for was he not rector elect, while Mr. St. John was but curate? Yet so far above him in years and experience, and all that constitutes superiority among gentlemen of equal breeding. Why was he here as curate? And why did *that* girl look at himself with so much suppressed passion in her eyes? and where had the other been trained to draw so well? and what was the meaning of the two children, so unlike all the others, whom his young enemy had carried off impetuously, instead of ringing the bell for their nurse as any one else would have done? Mildmay felt a thrilling sensation of newness as he sat down at the tea-table, and looked on, an interested spectator at all that was proceeding under his eyes. This in its way was evidently *life*; there was no mistaking the passion that existed underneath this quiet surface, the something more than met the eye. Was it a skeleton in the closet, as the domestic cynic says? But these were not words that seemed to

apply to this calm old man and these young girls. It was life, not the quiet of books, and learned talk, and superficial discussion, but a quiet full of possibilities, full of hidden struggle and feeling. Mildmay felt as if he had come out of his den in the dark like an owl, and half blinking in the unusual light, was placed as spectator of some strange drama, some episode full of interest, to the character of which he had as yet no clue.

"You are looking at the furniture; it is not mine," said Mr. St. John, "except the carpets, which, as you say, are much worn. The other things are all Mr. Chester's. I am expecting every day to hear what is to be done with them. Most likely they will sell it; if you wanted anything——"

Mildmay made a gesture of horror in spite of himself, and Mab laughed.

"You do not think Mr. Mildmay wants all that mahogany, papa? The catafalque there, Cicely and I agreed it was more like a tomb in Westminster Abbey than anything else."

"What is amiss with it?" said Mr. St. John. "I always understood it was very good. I am told they don't make things nearly so strong or so substantial now. Poor Chester! He was a man of very fine taste, Mr. Mildmay. But why do you laugh, my dear? That was why he was so fond of Italy; shattered health, you know. Those men who are so fond of art are generally excitable; a little thing has an effect upon them. Cicely, give Mr. Mildmay some tea."

"Yes, papa," said Cicely; and gave the stranger a look which made him think his tea might be poisoned. Mr. St. John went maundering kindly,

"You said you were going to London, and had left your things at the station? Why shouldn't you stay all night here instead? There are a great many things that I would like to show you—the church and the school for instance, and I should like to take you to see some of my poor people. Cicely, we can give Mr. Mildmay a bed?"

Cicely looked up at her father

quickly. There was a half-entreaty, a pathetic wonder, mingled with anger in her eyes. "How can you?" she seemed to say. Then she answered hesitating, "There are plenty of beds, but I don't know if they are aired—if they are comfortable." Strangely enough, the more reluctant she was to have him, the more inclined Mildmay felt to stay.

"It is very kind," he said. "I cannot think how it is possible that I can have had the assurance to thrust myself upon you like this. I am afraid Miss St. John thinks it would be very troublesome."

"Troublesome! There is no trouble at all. Cicely is not so foolish and inhospitable," said the curate in full current of his open-heartedness. "My dear, it is fine warm weather, and Mr. Mildmay is a young man. He is not afraid of rheumatics like the old people in the parish. He and I will walk up to the station after tea and fetch his bag, and I will show him several things on the way. You will tell Betsy?"

"I will see that everything is ready," she said, with so much more meaning in the words than was natural or necessary. Her eyes were a little dilated with crying, and slightly red at the edges; there was surprise and remonstrance in them, and she did not condescend by a single word to second her father's invitation. This settled the question. Had she asked him, Mildmay might have been indifferent; but as she did not ask him, he made up his mind it was quite necessary he should stay.

"I shall perhaps see you finish that group," he said to Mab, who was interested and amused by the novelty of his appearance, as her father was.

"Ah, but I shall never get them into the same *pose*! If papa had not come in so suddenly, waking them—besides spoiling my light—"

"I am afraid it was partly my fault," he said; "but I did not expect to be brought into the presence of an artist."

The colour rose on Mab's cheeks. "Please don't flatter me," she said. "I want so much to be an artist. Shall

I ever be able to do anything, do you think? for you seem to know."

Cicely looked at her sister, her eyes sparkling with offence and reproach. "The people who know you best think so," she said. "It is not right to ask a stranger. How can Mr. Mildmay know?"

How hostile she was! between her smiling pretty sister, who was ready to talk as much as he pleased, and her kind old suave father, what a rugged implacable young woman! What could he have done to her? Mildmay felt as much aggrieved when she called him a stranger, as if it had been a downright injury. "I know a little about art," he said quite humbly; "enough to perceive that your sister has a great deal of real talent, Miss St. John."

"Yes, yes, she is clever," said the curate. "I hope it will be of some use to you, my poor Mab. Now, Mr. Mildmay, let us go. I want to show you the rectory fields, and the real village, which is some way off. You must not think this cluster of houses is Brentburn. It is pleasant walking in the cool of the afternoon, and, my dears, a walk will be good for you too. Come down by the common and meet us. Cicely," he added in a half-whisper, standing aside to let his guest pass, "my dear, you are not so polite as I hoped. I wish you would look more kind and more pleased."

"But I am not pleased. Oh, papa, why did you ask him? I cannot bear the sight of him," she cried.

"My love!" said the astonished curate. He was so much surprised by this outburst that he did not know how to reply. Then he put his hand softly upon her forehead, and looked into her eyes. "I see what it is. You are a little feverish: you are not well. It is the hot weather, no doubt," he said.

"Oh, papa! I am well enough; but I am very wretched. Let me speak to you when we have got rid of this man—before you go to bed."

"Surely, my dear," he said soothingly, and kissed her forehead. "I should advise you to lie down for a little, and

keep quiet, and the fever may pass off. But I must not keep my guest waiting," and with this Mr. St. John went away, talking cheerfully in the hall to his companion as he rejoined him. "It is trying weather," they heard him saying. "I stopped behind for a moment to speak to my eldest daughter. I do not think she is well."

"Will papa discuss your health with this new man?" cried Mab. "How funny he is! But don't be so savage, Ciss. If it must be, let us make the best of it. Mr. Mildmay is very nice to talk to. Let us take whatever amusement is thrown in our way."

"Oh, amusement!" said Cicely. "You are like papa; you don't think what is involved. This is an end of everything. What are we to do? Where are we to go to? His name is not Mildmay; it is Ruin and Destruction. It is all I can do not to burst out upon him and ask him, oh! how has he the heart—how has he the heart to come here!"

"If you did I think he would not come," said Mab calmly. "What a pity people cannot say exactly what they think. But if he gave it up, there would be some one else. We must make up our minds to it. And how beautifully poor papa behaves through it all."

"I wish he were not so beautiful!" cried Cicely in her despair, almost grinding her white teeth. "I think you will drive me mad between you—papa and you."

CHAPTER X.

MR. MILDMAI had a very pleasant walk. He went through Brentburn proper, which was a mile from the church on the rich woodland side of the parish, an ordinary little village, a mixture of old picturesque Berkshire cottages, with high sloping roofs and aged harmonious mossy brick walls, and very new square houses in the bilious brick of modern use—mean and clean and angular. The cottages, with their wild old gardens and mossed apple-trees delighted him; but

the curate shook his head, "They will be the curse of your life," he said solemnly, at which the young Oxford man was disposed to laugh.

A few people were standing about their doors enjoying the cool evening, at whom the new rector looked with curiosity. They were very commonplace people, with the set hard faces so common among the rural poor, half caused by exposure to the open air, and half by the dull routine in which their life is spent. Mildmay looked at them wistfully. Were they the kind of people among whom he could find the life he sought? A few of the women were gossiping, the men stared blankly at him as he passed, saluting the curate gruffly; and evidently the wag among them made some rough joke, received with loud laughter, upon the two black-coats.

"Yes," said the curate mildly, "that fellow Joe Endley is one of the worst in the parish. It was at us, no doubt, they were laughing. Anything above their own level, except money, they don't understand; and they know I have no money. Good evening, Mr. Wilkins. What a sweet evening it is!"

"Good evening, sir," said the grocer, coming, with his apron round him from his shop-door. "I thought perhaps as you was comin' to me, sir, along o' the letter I sent you."

"I did not get any letter," said Mr. St. John, looking at the grocer in a helpless, pitiful way, which his companion remarked wonderingly. The curate seemed to shrink somehow: a painful look came upon his face.

"I sent up this afternoon with my cart," said Wilkins, "to say as, if it was quite convenient —."

"My daughter will see to it—my daughter will see to it," said the curate anxiously. "I am occupied at present, as you perceive, and in a hurry. She will see you, or I, to-morrow."

And he shuffled on through the dust of the highroad, quickening his pace. His step had been the long, firm, manly step of a man still young, till they met with this interruption. But poor Mr.

St. John fell into a shuffle when he met the grocer. His cheek got a hectic flush; he shrank visibly; his knees and his elbows grew prominent. He did not speak again till they had got beyond the village. Then he drew breath, and his natural outline came slowly back. "You will find much hardness among the people," he said; "Heaven forbid that I should blame them, poor souls: they live hardily, and have hardness to bear from others; but when any question arises between them and one who has unfortunately the niceties—the feelings—that we are brought up to —" (the curate stopped); "and I never was used to it," he said, as if to himself, in a low voice.

What did it all mean? the new rector said to himself. I think it was easy enough to divine, for my part; but then the rector was young, and had always been well off, and it did not occur to him that a grocer, simply as grocer, could have any power over a clergyman; more and more he felt convinced that some drama, some domestic tragedy, must be connected with the St. Johns, and he felt more and more eager to find it out. They went to the station, and sent a boy to the rectory with Mildmay's portmanteau, and then they strayed home by the common, across which the setting sun threw its very last slanting arrow of gold.

"This is delightful!" said Mildmay. "What freedom! what breadth of atmosphere! One feels oneself on the moors, in the great, ample world, not shut in by walls and houses."

"No, there is little of these," said the curate; "and it is very healthy, I have always understood: the common is what my girls love. But I don't see them coming." He arched his hand over his eyes as a defence against the light, as he looked along the road for his daughters. Mr. St. John had quite recovered himself. I don't think that even the name of Wilkins would have discouraged him now. In the warm and balmy air he took off his hat, holding up his venerable bare head to the

sky. It was a head which might have served for that of an old saint. His white hair was still thick and abundant, his eyes full of soft light, his expression tranquil as the evening. "I have come here in many troubles," he said, "and I have always been refreshed. I don't pretend to know much about art, Mr. Mildmay, but nature is always soothing. Greenness cools the eyes whether it is study or tears that have fevered them. But I wonder what has become of the girls."

Mildmay was charmed by the meditative turn his companion's remarks had taken, but the question about the girls embarrassed him.

"I am afraid," he said, "that my intrusion has perhaps given Miss St. John some trouble."

"No; there is the servant, you know, a very good sort of girl, and Cicely is like her dear mother—never taken by surprise. If you are here as long as I have been you will know how pleasant it is to see a new face. We country folks rust: we fall into a fixed routine. I myself, see, was about to take this little byway unconsciously, a path I often take, forgetting there was anyone with me——"

The curate looked wistfully along the thread of path; it had been worn by his own feet, and he seldom concluded his evening walk otherwise. Mildmay followed the narrow line with his eyes.

"It leads to the churchyard," he said. "I like a country churchyard. May we go there before we go in? What a pity the church is so new! and this part of Berkshire is rich in old churches, I understand?"

"It is in good repair, and much more wholesome than the old ones," said Mr. St. John. "They may be more picturesque. Here you can see into the rectory garden, the ground slopes so much; the church is very much higher than the common. It used to be sweet to me, looking back at the lights in the girls' rooms, when I stood — there they are on the lawn now, Mr. Mildmay. They have not gone out, after all."

Mildmay, looking down from the churchyard path, felt that it was dishonourable to spy upon the two girls unaware of his scrutiny, whom he could just see within the wall of the rectory garden; but he could not help feeling that this was more and more like a drama which was being played before him. He followed Mr. St. John along the narrow path to the little white stile which admitted to the churchyard. The curate ceased his tranquil talk as they entered that inclosure. He turned mechanically as it seemed, to the left hand, and went round to a white cross upon a grave turned towards the common. It was of common stone, grey with years. The curate took off his hat again, and stood by it quite simply and calmly.

"It used to be sweet to me, standing here, to see the lights in the girls' rooms," he said once more. The soft tranquillity of his tone suited the still twilight, the pensive silent plain. It was too still for sorrow, nor was there any touch of unhappiness in the gentle voice. Young Mildmay uncovered too, and stood wondering, reverent, with a swell of sympathy in his heart. Some men would have felt with anguish the unspeakable separation between the mother under the dews and the twinkle of the lights in her children's windows; but Mr. St. John was not of that mind. Yet, somehow, to have this stranger here made his loss seem fresher to him. "Cicely is very like her mother," he said, and touched the cross softly with his hand as if caressing it, and turned away. Mr. Mildmay could see that there were two paths up the mound to the white gate, and the meaning of them struck him vividly—one was that by which they had just come from the common, the other led down straight to the rectory. His heart was more touched than I can say, by the gentle fidelity, consoled and calm, yet always tender, which had worn that double line through the grass.

Mr. St. John, however, made a hesitating pause at a corner before he took this second way home. "My other

poor wife, poor Mrs. St. John, lies there; but that I can show you to-morrow," he said, in his gentle unchanged voice, and quietly went on to the gate, leading the way. "Supper will be ready," the curate continued, when they emerged again upon the turf. "We live a very simple primitive life here; our meals are not arranged quite as yours are, but it comes to the same thing. In short, whatever seeming differences there are, all ways of living come to much the same thing."

Did they so? Mr. St. John's meaning was of the simplest. He meant that whether you called your latest meal dinner or supper did not matter much; but his companion gave it a broader sense. With a jar of laughter in his mind that broke up the reverential respect of the previous moment, he followed his simple host into the house, which by and by was to be his own house. Poor Mrs. St. John, who was not the mother of the girls; whose grave could be shown to-morrow; for whose sake these paths had not been worn across the grass; the stranger gave her her little meed of human notice in that smothered laugh. Poor Miss Brown!

The supper was homely enough—cold meat and salad, and bread and cheese and jam—and would have been cheerful and pleasant, Mr. Mildmay thought, but for the absorbed looks of that elder daughter, who was still somewhat unfriendly to him. He went up stairs to his room, where a large mahogany four-post bed, with heavy moreen hangings, awaited him, before the night was very far advanced. When he had been there for a short time, he saw that his door was not shut, and went to close it. As he did so, he caught a glimpse of Cicely going down stairs. She had retired some time before he did, so that her reappearance struck him all the more; and she was quite unconscious that he saw her. She carried a candle in one hand, and a pile of tradesmen's books in the other. She was pale, her look fixed, her nostrils a little dilated, like some one going to a painful task, he

thought. As she moved down the dark staircase, a speck of light, with her candle shining on the whiteness of her face and dress, the walls, by which she flitted, looked more and more like the scenery of a drama to the young man. If they only would have opened, as in the *real* theatre, and shown him where she was going, what she was about to do! But this was very mean curiosity on Mr. Mildmay's part. He shut his door humbly, that she might not be disturbed by the sound, and after a while went meekly to bed, trying to say to himself that he had no right to pry into the business of these good people, who had been so kind to him; though, indeed, she had not been kind to him, he reflected, by way of lessening his own sense of guilt. He heard subdued voices below for some time after, and wished more than ever that the scenery would open, and reveal this scene to him; but the substantial walls stood fast, and the moreen curtains hung grimly about him, shutting out everything. There was no compromise about the furniture at the rectory; the pillared bedposts stood square, and stern, and strong, till poor Mildmay, dozing within them in the warm August night, thought them Samson's pillars in the house of Dagon, or the pillars of the earth.

Cicely went down to her father very resolute with her books. She had intended to say very little to him, but he had exasperated her, and she felt that she could not let him off. But her courage sank a little when she got into the study, and saw his white head in the light of the solitary candle. There were two candles on the table, but faithful to an old frugal habit, Mr. St. John had put out one of them when his guest left him. The room was good-sized, and full of huge mahogany book-cases; and as the table was at one end of it, there is no telling how full of gloom it was. One of the windows was open, and a great solid piece of darkness seemed to have taken its place, and to be pouring in. Mr. St. John was looking over some old sermons, bending

his head over the papers, with spectacles upon his nose, which he took off when Cicely came in. He did not usually sit up so long, and he was rather aggrieved at the late interview she had asked for. He did not like to be disturbed out of his usual way, and he felt that she was going to speak to him about Wilkins, the most painful subject which could be suggested. Cicely, too, when he raised his head, and took off his spectacles, found the interview a great deal more difficult than in her excited feelings she had supposed.

"Well, my dear," he said gently; "you wanted to speak to me." He gave a little shiver when he saw the books in her hand.

"Yes, papa," she said, laying them down on the table; and then there was a pause. The soft night air came in, and crept wistfully about the room, moving the curtains. When it approaches midnight, even in August, there is always something chill and mournful in the night wind.

"I wanted to speak to you," said Cicely, catching her breath a little; "it was about the books. I don't know if you have looked at them lately. Oh, papa! do you know that we are—in debt? I don't know how to say it—a great deal in debt!"

"Not a great deal, my dear," he said faintly; "something, I know. Wilkins spoke to me to-day—almost before Mr. Mildmay."

"It is not Wilkins alone," said Cicely solemnly; "it is everybody. The butcher, too; and, oh! so many little people. How are they ever to be paid? When I looked over the books to-day, not knowing—Oh! do you know how it has happened? Can they be cheating? It is my only hope."

"My dear," said the curate, faltering, "better that one should have done wrong than that a great many should have done wrong. Poor Mrs. St. John—nay, I should say both of us, Cicely; for I was also to blame. We were not like your mother, my dear; it all came natural to your mother; but she, or rather we ——" Mr. St. John's

voice sank into an indistinct confusion. He was too good to blame the poor woman who was dead, and he did not know how to meet the eyes thus shining upon him, youthful, inexorable, of Hester's child. But even Cicely was moved by her father's wistful looks, and the humility of his tone.

"If only one could see any way of paying them," she said; "if even we had been staying here! I had a plan, and we might have done it. And it brings it all so near, and makes it so certain, to see this man."

"My love," said the curate remonstrating, "we knew that some one must come. It is not his fault. Why should we be unkind to him?"

"Unkind! Oh papa!" cried Cicely in her exasperation, "what had we to do with him? It was not our business to feast him and pet him. But that is nothing," she said, trembling with excitement; "I will not blame you, papa, for that or anything, if only you will say now what you are going to do, or where you think we can go, or what I must say to these poor people. We cannot stay here and starve, or till they put us in prison—only tell me what we must do."

"How can I tell you, Cicely," said the curate, "when I do not know myself! I must advertise or something," he said helplessly. "I am old, my dear. Few people want a curate of my age; I suppose it almost looks like a stigma on a man to be a curate at my age."

"Papa!" Cicely stopped short in what she was going to say, and looked at him with strained and anxious eyes. She had meant to assail him for still being a curate, but his self-condemnation closed the girl's lips, or rather roused her in defence.

"Yes," said Mr. St. John, "you may say I ought to have thought of that sooner; but when things go on for a long time one asks one's self why should not they go on for ever? 'He said, There will be peace in my time.' That was selfish of Hezekiah, my dear, very selfish, when you come to think of it. But I daresay it never seemed so to him, and neither did it to me."

Cicely was utterly overpowered by this; her anger and impatience died out of her, and compunction and remorse rose in her heart. "That is not the right way to look at it," she said. "It is a shame that a man like you should only be a curate—oh, a shame to the Church and every one! Mr. Chester, who never was here, never did anything, what right had he to be the rector?—and this other person——" It was so necessary for poor Cicely in the disturbance of her mind to be angry with some one that naturally her wrath grew wild and bitter when she was free to pour it out upon strangers.

"Hush! hush! my dear," said the curate, with a half smile at her vehemence: for indeed he was deeply relieved to have the tide of indignation turned away from himself.

"Why should I hush, papa? It is your own college you say; but they never take the trouble to ask who is at Brentburn, who has been taking the duty, who has looked after the people when the rector has been so long away. When people have the patronage of a parish in their hands, ought they not to know about it? And how did they dare, how did they venture, to give it to anybody but you?"

"You don't understand," said Mr. St. John. "The livings are given to the Fellows, Cicely, to people who have distinguished themselves. The dons have no right to alienate a living, as it were, to put it away from those who have a right to it, and give it to one like me."

"What have they distinguished themselves in, papa? In Latin and Greek—which will do a great deal in the parish, don't you think? whereas you have distinguished yourself in Brentburn——"

"I have not done very much, my dear," said the curate, shaking his head.

"You have done all that has been done, papa; what are those college people worth? This fine gentleman!" cried Cicely, with scorn. (I wonder poor Mildmay did not feel himself shrink even within his four pillars and moreen curtains.) "He knows about art if

you please, and shudders at the sight of Mr. Chester's mahogany. Poor old things," the girl cried, turning round to look at the old bookcases with her eyes streaming, "I only know how fond I am of them now!"

I cannot tell how thankful her father was that the conversation had taken this turn. *He* too felt tenderly towards the old unlovely walls which had sheltered him so long, and in the circumstances he felt it no harm to speak a little more strongly than he felt. He looked round upon the ghostly room so dark in all its corners. "A great many things have happened to us here," he said; "this was the first room we sat in, your mother and I. What changes it has seen! I don't know how to make up my mind to leave it."

This brought back the girl to the original question. "But now," she said, drying her eyes, "there is no choice—we must leave it. I suppose that is what this Mr. Mildmay has really come about? He will give you some little time, I suppose. But papa, papa!" said Cicely, with a stamp of her foot to emphasize her words, "don't you see you *must* decide something—make up your mind to something? Hoping on till the last day will do no good to any one. And to think we should be so deep in debt! Oh, papa, what are we to do?"

"My dear, do not be hard upon me," said poor Mr. St. John; "I acknowledge, indeed, that it was my fault."

"It was not your fault—but I don't blame anybody. There was illness and weakness, and some people can and some people can't," said Cicely, with that mercy and toleration which are always, I fear, more or less, the offspring of contempt. "Let us not go back upon that—but, oh, tell me, what is to be done now?"

Mr. St. John shook his venerable head piteously. "What do you think, Cicely?" he said.

This was all she could get from him; and, oh, how glad he was when he was permitted to go to bed, and be done with it! He could not tell what to do—anything he had ever done had been

done for him (if it is not a bull to say so), and he had no more idea what independent step to take in this emergency, than one of the little boys had, to whose room he paid a half-surreptitious visit on his way to his own. Poor little souls! they were surreptitious altogether; even their father felt they had no right to be there in his daughters' way. He went in, shading his candle with his hand, not to disturb the slumbers of Annie, the little nursemaid, and approached the two little cots on tip-toe, and looked at the two little white faces on the pillows. "Poor little things," he said to himself. Miss Brown was well out of it; she had escaped all this trouble, and could not be called to account, either for the babies or those debts, which thus rose up against her in judgment. A dim giddiness of despair had made Mr. St. John's head swim while his daughter was questioning him; but now that the pressure was removed he was relieved. He sighed softly as he left the subject altogether, and said his prayers, and slept soundly enough. Neither the debts nor the babies weighed upon him—at least "no more than reason;" he was quite able to sleep and to forget.

When Mr. Mildmay came down stairs next morning, and looked in at the open door of the dining-room, he saw Cicely "laying the cloth" there, putting down the white cups and saucers, and preparing the breakfast-table with her own hands. He was so much surprised at this, that he withdrew hastily, before she perceived him, with an uneasy sense that she might not like to be caught in such an occupation, and went to the garden, where, however, he could still see her through the open windows. He was not used to anything of the kind, and it surprised him much. But when he got outside he began to reflect, why should she be ashamed of it? There was nothing in the action that was not graceful or seemly. He saw her moving about, arranging one thing after another, and the sight made somehow a revolution in his mind. He had been in the habit of thinking it rather dread-

ful, that a man should expose his wife—a lady—to be debased into such ignoble offices, or that any gentlewoman should have such things to do. This was the first time he had ever seen domestic business of a homely kind done by a lady, and my *dilettante* was utterly annoyed at himself, when he found that, instead of being hurt and wounded by the sight, he liked it! Terrible confession! He went up and down the garden walks, pretending to himself that he was enjoying the fresh air of the morning, but actually peeping, spying, at the windows, watching Miss St. John arrange the breakfast. She had not seen him, but, quite unconscious of observation, absorbed in her own thoughts, she went on with her occupation. There were more things to do than to put the table to rights, for Betsy's work was manifold, and did not admit of very careful housemaid work. Mr. Mildmay watched her for some time, coming and going; and then he became aware of another little scene which was going on, still nearer to himself. Out from a side door came the two little boys, hand in hand, with their hats tied on, and overshadowing the little pallid faces like two mushrooms. They were followed out by their little nurse, who watched their decorous exit with approval. "Now take your walk, till I come and fetch you," said this small guardian; upon which the two little urchins, tottering, but solemn, began a serious promenade, so far along the gravel walk, so far back again, turning at each end as on an imaginary quarter-deck. The little boys tottered now and then, but recovered themselves, and went on steadily up and down, backward and forward, without a break. Mildmay was fond of children (so long as they did not bore him), and he was more amused than he could say. He made a few steps across the lawn to meet them, and held out his hands. "Come along here," he said; "come on

the grass." The solemn babies paused and looked at him, but were not to be beguiled from their steady promenade. Their portentous gravity amazed him—even the children were mysterious in this romantic rectory. He went up to meet them on their next turn.

"Come, little ones," he said, "let us be friends. What are your names?"

They stood and looked at him with their big blue eyes, holding fast by each other. They were unprepared for this emergency, as their father was unprepared for the bigger emergency in which he found himself. At last one small piping voice responded "Harry!" the other instinctively began to suck his thumb.

"Harry—and what else?—come, tell me," said the new rector; "you are not both Harry." He stood looking at them, and they stood and looked at him; and the two babies, three years old, understood as much about that quintessence of Oxford, and education and culture, as he did of them; they gazed at him with their four blue eyes exactly in a row. "Come, speak," he said, laughing; "you have lost your tongues." This reproach roused Charlie, who took his thumb out of his mouth and put his whole hand in, to search for the tongue which was not lost.

The sound of Mildmay's voice roused Cicely. She came to the window, and looking out saw him there, standing in front of the children. Many schemes had been throbbing in her head all night. She had not slept tranquilly, like her father. She had been pondering plans till her brain felt like a honeycomb, each cell holding some active notion. She paused a moment, all the pulses in her beginning to throb, and looked out upon the opportunity before her. Then, after a moment's hesitation, she put down the little brush she held in her hand, threw up the window a little higher and stepped out—to try one other throw, though the game seemed played out, with Fortune and Fate!

To be continued.

A SCHOOLMASTER OF THE RENAISSANCE.

VITTORINO DA FELTRE.

ONE of the chief features of the early Renaissance is its entire simplicity and straightforward earnestness. It was not perplexed by fear lest it might awaken antagonism, for it was not conscious of any opposition to existing systems of life. It appealed only to men's desire to make the best they could of themselves. It called upon them to know the value of the treasures which were really theirs, but which they had let slip from careless hands. Around them were the riches of the past, the literature and art of Italy's golden days, which a wave of barbarism had scattered and hidden too long from the eyes of Italy's true sons. It was an object worthy of the best energies of the noblest minds to gather together all that could be saved from the wreck, to cleanse the remnants carefully and tenderly from the dirt and rubbish with which they had been encrusted, and then set them lovingly before young minds, which might learn from them all that was noble in the life of the past.

This was the spirit of the early Renaissance in Italy. It had no hidden meaning, it cherished nothing which it need be afraid to tell abroad. It combated nothing in existing systems, because it made no claim to have a system of its own. It went along its own course with a deep belief in man's perfection, and a deep desire to cultivate man's nature into all that it could become.

It is true that a time came when the spiritual enfranchisement brought about by the Renaissance began to degenerate into license. This is a danger which all movements towards greater freedom have always had to face. It is hard to pour new wine into old bottles, and there is always the same twofold danger—that the bottles will burst, and the wine be spilt. It was so with Italy of the later fifteenth century. Spiritual freedom tended to run riot; the self-assertion of the individual loosened

the bonds of society; mental subtilty pared away the obligations of morality; religion was threatened with gradual dissolution before the gentle solvent of graceful and playful criticism. Culture had become a source of weakness rather than of strength. The Italian mind had lost its beliefs, and with its beliefs had lost all meaning. Under the hard rule of the foreigner, and under the galling fetters of the old dogmatic system, restored as a harsh despot, and ruling no longer as an indulgent master, Italy was doomed to learn, by three centuries of silent suffering, how freedom could be woven into the web of daily life.

Yet her experience had not been in vain. In the long years of her own darkness she still might feel that the torch which she had kindled was blazing steadily, if not brightly, in other more favoured lands. To mediæval Italy must all who honour culture, turn with unfailing reverence; for she has ever been the home of great interpreters who have revealed man to himself, and have taught him in ever-changing forms to see and know what is the heritage which the past has handed on.

In the higher lines of literature and art this is perhaps sufficiently felt and has been often enough expressed; but in smaller things it is forgotten. We are accustomed, for instance, to look for the origin of our ideas of education to the gradual progress of society, to the workings of modern philanthropy or the enlightened teaching of modern science. Education amongst us has grown slowly to become a part of our political life. Its function is held to consist in drilling the young into fitness to discharge their duties as citizens. Our highest views of education rarely go beyond this. No teacher amongst us would venture to say that he had no belief in the efficacy of formal outward discipline, or of the rigid tests of unbending

examinations, but that his aim was to develop with care and tenderness the youthful spirit into liberty, beauty, and grace.

It may perhaps be worth while to bring forward from his obscurity, for a little while, a great Italian teacher of the early and unconscious epoch of the Renaissance. Like all men who have been content only to teach without aspiring to literary fame, his name is seldom heard; for his labours left no other fruit than the noble actions of his scholars, which the world claimed for its own and straightway forgot. Yet his silence might deserve respect. Enough, he said, had been written by those of old; his work was to try and make men understand the meaning of the treasures which they already possessed.

Vittorino dei Ramboldini was born of a noble but poor family in Feltre, in the year 1378. Having a taste for learning, he went to the University of Padua, where he maintained himself by acting as tutor to younger boys while he pursued his own studies. He was not satisfied merely with the ordinary reading for the doctor's degree, but wished also to obtain a knowledge of mathematics, a science then so little known that there was at Padua only one professor who was acquainted even with the outlines. He, moreover, lectured publicly on philosophy, and refused to part with his mathematical knowledge, except to private pupils on payment of large fees. These Vittorino's poverty made it hopeless for him to pay. In vain he strove by entreaties to prevail on the avaricious Biagio Pelacane to give him a few lessons for the love of knowledge. In vain he tried to melt him by humility—even offering to work out the fees by rendering menial service. For six months Vittorino acted as his servant, waiting on him at table, and washing his plates and dishes; but the proud professor was relentless, and would have nothing but the money. Stung by such unworthy treatment, Vittorino procured a Euclid, and never rested till he had puzzled out for himself its contents, and by that means obtained a firm hold of the principles of geometry. He did not, however, wish to use his knowledge as food either for vanity or avarice. What he had so hardly learned he readily

taught to any who came to him, till his fame spread in Padua and his story became known. Pelacane discovered, when it was too late, that generosity in education is the best policy, and that a reputation which wishes to stand upon the exclusive possession of knowledge rests on an insecure footing. He was exposed to ridicule, his pupils all deserted him, and he had to leave Padua for Parma, where he died five years afterwards, in 1416.

Henceforward Vittorino had a secure reputation in Padua, but he lived as a retired student, teaching a few pupils and ready to assist all who came to him. He knew much, but still was ignorant of Greek, till, in the year 1420, when he was more than forty years of age, he went to Venice to learn Greek from Guarino. In him he did not find another Pelacane but a warm-hearted student, who gladly taught him all he knew, and warmly appreciated his simple moral worth. Vittorino returned to Padua, and was regarded by all with reverence as a prodigy; by his own efforts he had raised himself to the rank of one of the greatest scholars in Italy. He was now past the prime of life and had shown no desire for self-advancement, no interest beyond a genuine love for knowledge. His company was eagerly sought, and his advice reverently asked and listened to. In 1422 the students of the Gymnasium besought him to be their teacher in philosophy and rhetoric.

At the age of forty-four Vittorino first became a public teacher, and instituted that system of education on which his reputation is founded. Having no object in life except the good of his pupils, he devised the plan of living entirely among them. Accordingly he chose a few, whom he took to live with him in his own house, and whose whole life was spent in his presence. Though this was the plan which he afterwards developed, he does not seem to have been successful at first. In a year he resigned his professorship at Padua, disgusted by the insolence and vices of his pupils, and went to Venice, where he at once opened a school. Numbers flocked to him immediately, for he was already known there through his acquaintance with Guarino. Many, however, who

applied to him were condemned to disappointment, for he adhered rigorously to two rules—that he would not undertake to teach more scholars than he could do entire justice to, and that he would choose his scholars solely by reference to their fitness in character and intellect to profit by his teaching. No offers of enormous pay could tempt him to relax these rules. The son of the wealthy merchant was sent away, as too much spoiled already to be made much of; the beggar boy whose face had attracted Vittorino's attention in the street was chosen to fill the empty place in his rising school-house. He did not, however, remain at Venice long enough to develop his system fully; in 1425 he received an invitation from Gian Francesco Gonzaga, lord of Mantua, to go to his court and undertake the education of his children. Gonzaga had selected him for this office solely on the ground of his merits; but it was some time before Vittorino could determine to expose his simple and straightforward character to the perils of a court life. He came to the conclusion at last that he would not be justified in refusing such an opportunity of extending his usefulness. He went to Mantua, and there taught without intermission for the next twenty-two years until his death.

Gian Francesco Gonzaga was a wise and prudent ruler, who knew how to consult the interests of his State. The position of his city on a promontory between two lakes made it almost impregnable, and the marquis knew how to use his soldiers to advantage in the perpetual wars between Venice and Milan. He was careful always to be well paid, either for his services or his neutrality, so his people prospered under his rule, and he, in imitation of his more powerful neighbour, Galeazzo Visconti, had instituted a luxurious court, and aimed at introducing greater refinement and intelligence among his people. His wife, Paola dei Malatesti of Rimini, was a woman of really noble character, combining with decided intellectual tastes great practical benevolence, and unaffected affability. The Mantuans regarded her with great respect and affection; "the orphans, the poor, and the monks honoured her as children do

their mother, and the people flocked round her when she went into the streets." Nor was she less beloved by her husband, in whose will are contained the strictest injunctions to his successor to consult and obey his mother in all matters. We may assume that Paola had desired to have the best possible education for her children, and that her husband made no difficulties. He was a worthy man, but not of remarkable elevation of mind. Poggio praises him for "virtue, prudence, affability, anxious care for the welfare of learned men, and unceasing diligence in self-education," and his treatment of Vittorino shows that he could certainly appreciate merit in others.

Vittorino was well pleased with his first interview with the Marquis. His only request was that he might have full authority over the servants of his young pupils, and over the youths who were educated with them. He made no stipulation about salary, saying that he had come to propagate virtue, not to make gain; but the marquis made him a liberal monthly allowance, and ordered his treasurer moreover to pay whatever Vittorino demanded. The house in which he was to live with his pupils pleased him greatly, but the whole life to which the boys had been accustomed seemed to him radically wrong. Luxury of every kind, rich food and drink, obsequious servants to do the slightest office, a number of the noblest youths of Mantua as attendants, all bent on commending themselves to the princes, all braggarts and flatterers—this was what Vittorino found, and it filled him with despair. How was education to proceed in such an atmosphere, and how was he to change it? His first thought was to resign his post at once as hopeless; but his second thought was that he was at least bound to do his best, and see if the Marquis really had confidence in him, and would uphold his authority. Accordingly, he waited for a little while, and looked on, a passive spectator of the scene around him. He allowed every one to think that he was weak and careless, till they behaved in his presence as though he were not there, and so showed him their real character. When he had by this

means obtained sure information about them, he suddenly began his reform. All the noble youths of Mantua, with only a few exceptions, were summarily dismissed. The household was rigorously cut down, and the exact functions of the remaining servants were accurately fixed; a porter was put before the door to see that no one went in or out except by Vittorino's permission; and simple fare took the place of luxurious living. Vittorino had waited to make sure that his knowledge equalled his zeal, and then introduced all his reforms at once, and carried them out with decision. Great was the commotion in Mantua, and many were the complaints made to the Marquis by parents, who felt aggrieved by this ignominious expulsion of their sons; but the military habits of the condottiere general made him sympathise with vigorous and sweeping measures. He refused to interfere, and waited to see some definite results of the system thus begun.

Vittorino was encouraged by this tolerance to persevere and soon produced results about which no one could doubt. The young princes were not at first sight very promising pupils. Ludovico, the elder, was so fat that he could scarcely walk, and moved as if he had been made in one piece. His brother Carlo was, on the other hand, a tall awkward boy, of weakly and attenuated appearance. Vittorino felt it was useless to make much of minds enveloped in bodies such as these. His first care was to reduce the size of Ludovico, and feed up Carlo into decent proportions. He had a horror of corpulence, declaring that the mind must always be wearied that had to carry a heavy load, and would never be able to see if the cloud of the body were too dense; so he cut down Ludovico's food, and allowed him only simple diet. At the same time, not wishing to seem cruel, he gave him other amusements; and often, if he saw him eating gluttonously at dinner, would interest him in talk to make him forget his absorbing interest in his food; or he would have music and singing introduced to distract his attention, and then would give a signal that his plate should be quietly removed. For Carlo, on the other hand, he provided simple and nutritious

diet, telling him to eat whenever he felt hungry, but only allowing him between his meals dry bread, which would be enough to satisfy his wants without encouraging him in gluttony. Under this careful treatment the boys rapidly improved in health and appearance, and their parents understood in a most convincing way the wisdom and value of Vittorino's training.

Secure of his position, Vittorino began to develop his system. He received numerous applications for admission to the vacant places which his expulsions had made, but he subjected all candidates to a rigorous test and rejected all of whose character he disapproved, or who he thought were better fitted for other than intellectual pursuits. He chose his pupils reverently, and impressed upon them that they were entering upon a lofty calling, and that their schoolroom should be to them a holy place (*tanquam sacellum ingressuros*). He demanded that they should give up everything to their studies, saying that a love of knowledge and a love of pleasure could not exist at the same time. He preferred the sons of noble parents, if they were equally fit, for thorough-bred colts, he said, were best worth training; but he took in and taught with equal care poor and ignoble youths, who showed signs of promise, and the payments made by the wealthy were devoted to the necessities of his poorer scholars. Under this system Mantua became the great educational centre of Italy, and pupils even crossed the Alps to obtain the benefits of Vittorino's teaching. His fame brought credit upon the town, and his simple manners and entire devotion to his own duties disarmed all possible hostility. Mantua soon became proud of him, and he was treated with reverence by all. The Marquis rose to meet him when he appeared at court, and would never suffer him to stand in his presence. Wherever Vittorino went the tone of conversation ceased to be trivial, and he reproved even the Marquis for loose or unseemly talking in his presence; the reverence due to youth was claimed by their teacher.

Vittorino's method of education was as universal and liberal as was the spirit of

his age. He aimed at cultivating the entire man, in a fullness before which all modern definitions of culture seem narrow and one-sided. The idea of cultivation at present prevalent is that of the refined and high-minded man, who living in the world without being of it, tries to protect himself from its sordour by the free play of his critical faculties, which he uses with equal freedom upon everything, so as to avoid falling under the tyranny of any. Cultivation is realized by abstraction from the current of ordinary life. This was not the culture of the Renaissance, for then man felt that the world and all its contents were his own possession, and that his surroundings could be moulded entirely to his will. Vittorino did not arm his pupils merely for defence against this world. He equipped them that they might conquer it for themselves. Their future was dark and admitted of endless possibilities; they might become princes, generals, statesmen, cardinals, bishops, or men of letters. Noble birth in those changing times did not necessarily imply hereditary rights; obscure origin did not hopelessly debar from the richest principalities. Any of the youths before him might be called by accident, or win his way by his own talents, to the loftiest positions. One thing only was certain, that the keen intellect was sure to carve out its fortune.

So Vittorino trained his pupils in all knightly and martial exercises, in which he always took part himself, and taught their bodies agility by athletics, which he always superintended. Riding, wrestling, fencing, archery, tennis, foot-races, and swimming, formed part of their daily occupations. Sometimes he would lead them to the chase, or instruct them in fishing. Sometimes he would divide them into squadrons, and organize a sham fight; now he would lead one party to the charge, now help their enemy to hold their mimic castle, and "his heart rejoiced when their shouts went up to heaven and all was filled with dust." He inured them to suffer hardships and be brave, to be indifferent to heat and cold, and never shrink from danger. "Remember, my dear boys," he used to say, "you know not what manner

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of life Providence may have ordained for you." He allowed no lounging round the fire even on the coldest day, but insisted that the boys should gain warmth by exercise. He was careful that their food should be simple, and set them an example of extreme sobriety; as they pressed things upon him at meals, he would laugh and say, "See how different we are; you are anxious that I should want nothing; I, on the contrary, am careful that you should have nothing unnecessary." He felt that excess of eating and sleeping, and personal indolence and effeminacy, were the first fertile sources of the moral and physical disorders of youth, and that it was useless to attempt to educate the mind, if the body were neglected. Yet with all this he was most careful of their health, watching over each of his pupils, and from time to time taking them all to the hills for change of air.

But he did not only develop the body in this way, he was most careful also to refine it. He corrected all faults in voice and enunciation, removed all awkwardness of manner, remedied small personal defects, and instilled dignity and decorum. He taught his pupils to avoid all obtrusive peculiarities, and above all fidgetiness; if a boy was restless, he would draw a circle on the floor and bid him not come out of it for a given time. He insisted on great attention to personal neatness, and saw that every boy was well dressed in accordance with his rank, and always carefully; yet he was a bitter foe to foppery, and mocked at those who looked at themselves too long in the glass: he allowed no scents or unguents, for he considered them to be signs of effeminacy. His pupils were trained in all social graces as well as in bodily prowess: they were taught to dance and sing, that they might be fit to shine in the festival as well as on the field.

In matters of intellectual training he was equally universal in his principles and method. He did not disdain to teach the youngest boys, but rather was unwilling to build upon another man's foundation. His advice to all who were anxious to prepare for his teaching was, "to unlearn at once what by misfortune they had mislearned elsewhere." He taught little

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boys their alphabet by giving them as toys letters of various colours. He watched the direction which the growing curiosity of the youthful mind most naturally took, that he might gain indications of its natural capacity and bent. A boy's natural talents, he said, were like a field, which if well tilled would produce a fruitful crop of knowledge; but the tillage must be adapted to the field, and the boy's mind must be indulged in that study in which it took the greatest delight. So Vittorino was resolved to supply teaching in all possible subjects, and trained up teachers according to his own views, to whom he would assign special branches of knowledge. He even brought over four native Greeks that they might teach their language accurately. All these masters were treated by him with perfect impartiality, and their subjects met with equal respect. Civil and canon law and natural philosophy were the only special subjects for which he did not provide teachers; but if any student, who had gone through his general course, showed an aptitude for these pursuits, he advised him in the choice of a university, and, if he were poor, maintained him during his studies there. In days when manuscripts were a costly possession, Vittorino's library was renowned throughout Italy, so that his scholars were well provided with every means of study.

He taught first the ordinary subjects of the Trivium, and began by a training in the classical languages, literature, and history. "How foolish," exclaims one of his disciples, Sassuolo da Prato, "are those who strive to study philosophy without an accurate knowledge of the language in which it is written; who do not know that Plato is like Jupiter speaking Greek, and Aristotle rolls on a golden river of speech. No wonder that such incompetent inquirers fail to understand philosophy altogether, and content themselves with the barren teaching of the schoolmen; and while they think they are leading home Minerva as their chaste bride, know not that it is Calypso, a most wanton woman, whom they hold in their embrace." From this fatal ignorance Vittorino secured his pupils by giving

them a broad basis of literary training. Virgil, Homer, Cicero, and Demosthenes, were the authors whom he first taught, and the experience of schoolmasters since his days has not been able to suggest anything better. When his pupils had obtained a tolerable knowledge of the classics, they were next taught dialectic, the science of sound logic, and were well exercised in the examination and detection of fallacies in common reasoning. From dialectic they went to rhetoric, and were taught to write, read, and speak correctly and gracefully. Public disputations were held by them, and Vittorino sat by to judge and arbitrate between their arguments. Mathematics and music were ordinarily the subjects next pursued.

As a teacher, Vittorino aimed especially at clearness and simplicity: he considered carefully beforehand the subject on which he was going to lecture, and then trusted to the impulse of the moment to enable him to state accurately and intelligently what he had to say. His expressions, as became his character, were always refined and modest; but he was careful not to seem to commend himself by his method of teaching, nor to allow graces of style to hide and overlay the matters he was explaining. He did not encourage his pupils to ask explanations at once of what they could not understand, but bade them go away after each lesson and think it over while it was fresh in their minds; if they found any difficulties they were to come for explanation afterwards. He was anxious to secure attention by kindling interest; he often purposely made mistakes in explaining passages from the classical authors, to see if his class would correct him. He strengthened the memory of his scholars by making them learn by heart the finest passages of the authors they were reading. He was very careful in looking over their exercises, and always pointed out accurately the reason for any objections he had to raise. So ready was his sympathy with his pupils that he would shed tears of joy over a good composition.

He maintained discipline by his force of character, and rarely had recourse to personal chastisement. Remonstrances and reproofs were sufficient, for he was never

suspected of partiality, and was most careful to escape being misled by anger. He knew that he was naturally of a choleric disposition, and so took every precaution against it; his elder pupils were charged, if ever they saw him likely to lose his temper, to interrupt him by some question, or call him away to ask his opinion on some other subject, that so he might have time to recover his equal balance of mind. He knew well how to appeal by simple honesty to the boyish mind, and all quailed before his anger or scorn. He was careful by judicious praise to encourage the timid, and would remorselessly rally the forward to cure them of arrogance.

The moral side of Vittorino's system has been already noticed in some of its chief points. He would receive no boy whom he did not believe to be free from vices, and he allowed no one to come near his pupils except by his permission. He lived entirely among them, and never willingly lost sight of them. He fed them simply, and took care that all their time was well employed. Being a man of fervent piety, he attended mass daily and took his pupils with him. He kept far from them everything that could suggest disorder or even indecorum. Carlo Gonzaga, some time after he had left Vittorino's care returning to his old school and engaging in a game of tennis forgot himself in the excitement of the moment, when he had made a bad stroke, and uttered an oath. Vittorino, who was standing by as a spectator, sprung upon him, seized him by the hair, and boxed his ears soundly, overwhelming the youth with such bitter reproaches that he fell upon his knees, and, confessing humbly his fault, besought Vittorino to forgive him. Moved by his sorrow the master's anger passed away, and, with tears in his eyes, he thanked Heaven for a pupil so obedient to reproof.

Such is a brief sketch of the various sides of Vittorino's system of education; his pupils showed forth its fruits. Ludovico Gonzaga, who succeeded his father in 1444, was not only a second founder to Mantua and a great patron of the arts and letters, but was beloved by his people for his justice and humanity. Carlo Gonzaga, it is true, quarrelled with

his brother, and led a wandering life, but was renowned for his learning and personal kindness. The third son, Gian Lucido, was a prodigy of learning. Ambogio Traversari tells us that Vittorino once brought Gian Lucido with him on a visit to Camaldoli, when the boy, who was only of the age of fourteen, recited a Latin poem of 200 lines, which he had written in honour of a visit of the Emperor Sigismund to Mantua. "The poem was beautiful, but the sweetness with which it was recited increased its nobility and elegance. This amiable youth showed us two propositions which he had added to the geometry of Euclid. There was also a daughter of the Marquis, about the age of twelve, who wrote Greek with such elegance that I felt ashamed of myself when I thought that scarcely one of my pupils could write it so well."

The daughter here mentioned, Cecilia Gonzaga, was a devoted pupil of Vittorino, and afterwards, to the great anger of her father, refused to marry the profligate Oddantonio of Montefeltro, Count of Urbino, and insisted upon taking the veil. The fame of her learning and piety is widely spread among the writers of the time. The youngest son of the Marquis, Alessandro Gonzaga, suffered under ill-health, which he bore with patience, devoting all his time to literary pursuits, and living a retired and contented life till his death.

It would be tedious to enumerate the various men of literary and political eminence in their day, who came from Vittorino's school and bore the impress of his training. A glance down the long list of his pupils shows how his teaching influenced the times; but one shines among them, who was Vittorino's favourite pupil, and whose noble life testifies that he deserved his master's preference—Federigo, who, on the murder of Count Oddantonio, was called by the people of Urbino to be their prince. Federigo of Urbino is the ideal Italian prince—a bold and successful general, a wise and merciful governor, a bounteous patron of arts and letters, a most polished and accomplished cavalier whose ready courtesy extended to the humblest of his subjects. He was a true father

of his people, to whom they all flocked for advice and assistance in their personal difficulties, and whose sympathy and help the poorest knew he could claim. Under him Urbino grew into a political and literary capital, and his fame was so far spread abroad that Edward IV. of England sent to invest him with the Order of the Garter.¹

The account of Vittorino's school is also the history of his life ; for all his interests were centred in his pupils, and when friends exhorted him to marry he would point to his scholars and exclaim, "These are my children." All the money which he received he spent in the maintenance of poor students, or in acts of charity. He was diligent in visiting the poor, he ransomed slaves, released debtors from prison, supplied medicine to those who could not afford to buy it, and indulged in the graceful charity of providing dowrs for poor and deserving girls. For these purposes he drew from the Prince's treasury such sums as he thought he might reasonably take as almoner. If he wanted more he would apply to the wealthy men in the city, and never failed to have his requests supplied.

The only important event that disturbed his orderly life was the quarrel between the Marquis and his eldest son, Lodovico, who, thinking himself slighted by his father, ran away to Duke Filippo Maria, Visconte of Milan, in 1436. His father, enraged at the political complications to which this gave rise, obtained from the Emperor Sigismund an authorization enabling him to disinherit the rebellious boy. Vittorino tried to make peace, and was assisted in this emphatically, but not wisely, by the eccentric sage Poggio Bracciolini. His proceedings in the matter give an amusing specimen of the relations existing at that time between princes and

men of letters. Poggio wrote to Vittorino, saying, that though they only knew one another by name, he had heard so much of Vittorino's love for learning and learned men, that he felt no scruple in lading him with the duty of delivering to the Marquis of Mantua a letter which he inclosed. The letter contained a good scolding for the Marquis. His son, Poggio said, had done wrong, it was true, but it was the father's fault for treating him unkindly. His offence had not been against the State, but against his father, and he had done himself more harm by his proceedings than he had done his father. It was not right to punish him so severely. "I know," said Poggio, "that princes are praised whatever they do, and are surrounded by flatterers, who always approve of their plans. I write to give you good and sound advice." Vittorino doubted whether the letter would produce the effect which Poggio desired ; so he waited two months before presenting it, perhaps trying meanwhile to prepare the Marquis's mind for what was coming. His efforts, however, were in vain, as Gonzaga refused to receive the letter, and ordered Vittorino to send it back. Great was Poggio's indignation. He wrote angrily to Vittorino for not having executed his commission at once. A Marquis of Mantua, he bitterly remarked, is not a second Cæsar, that his time should be so valuable as not to receive a letter when sent. If he had been a man of any culture such a letter would have been acceptable to him. It certainly was good enough for him, for it had been shown beforehand to the Pope, and had met with his approval. At the same time Poggio wrote a respectful yet stinging letter to the Marquis ; he had heard that he had literary tastes, and assumed that he was consequently polished and refined, and superior to vulgar insolence and pride. Trusting to this belief, he had ventured to write and address him. He was sorry his letter had not been received as he expected; however, the Marquis was the best judge of his own matters. The letter would be shown to those who could appreciate it, as it was founded on reason and supported by arguments which had cogency in themselves, and did not depend merely on their

¹ A few other names may be worth mentioning of Vittorino's more eminent pupils : Francesco Prendilacqua, of Mantua, who wrote his life : Gregorio Corrarò of Venice ; Giambattista Pallavicini, bishop of Reggio ; Taddeo de' Manfredi, lord of Imola ; Antonio Beccaria of Verona ; Francesco da Castiglione ; Gregorio Guarino, whose father sent him to Vittorino as better able to teach than himself, and Lorenzo Valla.

favourable reception by him to whom they were addressed.

We do not know the end of this squabble. Most probably the fear of affronting one who could use his pen with such pungency as Poggio induced the Marquis to receive his letter at last. At all events, a few years afterwards Poggio writes of Gian Francesco Gonzaga in a friendly tone, which he would not have adopted if any grudge had rankled in his breast. The unhappy quarrel between father and son was settled by natural affection and motives of policy, and Gian Francesco laid aside his intention of disinheriting his son, to Vittorino's great joy.

Little remains to be told of Vittorino's life. He died at the age of sixty-eight, in 1446, two years after the accession of his pupil Ludovico. He continued teaching up to the time of his death, and reaped the fruits of his healthy and regular life by entire freedom from the annoyances of old age. His biographers record their admiration that he showed no signs of decaying faculties or decreasing vigour. He was in appearance a little man, of impetuous temperament, of spare habit of body, with a fresh, ruddy complexion and sharp features, and a frank, honest, and genial expression of countenance.

Vittorino da Feltre possessed an honesty and simplicity of character, together with a noble self-devotion to a great cause, which would always arrest the attention of anyone who came upon the record of his life. But besides his moral worth, the actual work on which he was engaged is still of living interest for us. The system of education existing at present is the legacy of the Renaissance impulse; the ideal of a "classical education" is embodied in the system which Vittorino carried out.

But Vittorino lived in one of the rare periods of the world's history when man had realized his spiritual freedom; when the world had lost its terrors, and its irreconcilable antagonisms were for a short space at rest; when, like Dante at the entrance of the earthly Paradise, man felt both crown and mitre fixed firmly upon his brow. At such time the teacher, withheld by no inner contradictions, might venture to make his

teaching a real reproduction of the variety of actual life. He was not bound to develop merely the intellect, through fear of venturing into dangerous regions of discussion if he advanced beyond simple intellectual training. He was not restrained from encouraging to their fullest extent all manly exercises through fear that they would become too engrossing, for Italian society was too refined to admit a mere athlete into any position of prominence. He was not checked in the adaptation of his teaching to the real conditions of life by the pre-eminent necessity of maintaining a decent standard of morality among an unwieldy and unmanageable mob of boys unnaturally removed from the ordinary motives to conduct.

In this last point lies the great difference between Vittorino's teaching and all modern methods. He dealt with boys whom he had previously selected as likely to profit by his teaching,—dealt with a number sufficiently small to allow of his real personal supervision. He lived amongst them an honest, simple life, and the fact of his presence among them was the foundation and system of order and discipline. There was no oppressive enforcement of trivial rules, insignificant in themselves and founded upon no obvious principle; but master and pupils lived a common life, and acted freely together, because their ends were the same, and because the life they led was not different in kind, though simpler, healthier, and more active in degree, than the common life of the world whose voice surged round the walls of their school-rooms. Schools amongst us are founded on a quite different basis from that of Vittorino. They are great public institutions for the good of certain classes in society, into which any one can claim admission, and from which expulsion is regarded as a serious disgrace. Hence they are overgrown, and unmanageable except by a system of military discipline. To discipline mainly are given up the energies of those engaged in education, and the real moral and intellectual advancement of the individual pupil is subordinate to the formal organization of the society. Schools grow up each with a

recognizable type of character of its own, with traditions and customs which every now and then, when brought into prominence, create equal astonishment and disgust in the minds of those who have not been subjected to them, with a set of principles which have often to be exchanged, and always to be largely modified by the schoolboy when he goes out into the world. This essential difference, which is the fault, not of our schools, and still less of their teachers, but of our whole social condition and our social aims, renders impossible amongst us the flower of perfect training which Vittorino tried to cultivate and develop.

Vittorino's teaching was as broad and liberal as was the life of man, and aimed at nothing less than the full development of individual character, the entire realization of all human capacity and force. Yet it is wonderful to notice how this revolt against the narrow ecclesiastical spirit of the Middle Ages, this deliberate working out of the freedom which the Renaissance had proclaimed, still clothed itself in the trappings of the old monastic institutions, and modelled itself after the fashion of what it had risen to subvert. Vittorino arose a monk of the order of the Renaissance, who went out into the wilderness and gathered round him a little band, whom he trained that they might labour after he was gone, till the waste places should blossom like the rose. He would have no half-hearted disciples; they must give themselves entirely up to him, and submit themselves to his will. "Unlearn," such were his requirements from a neophyte, "what grossness you have mislearned before. Purge your mind from every prejudice and vicious habit, and give yourself up entirely to a teacher who bestows on you a father's care, and whom you must obey as a son." He trained them up to an ascetic system, not that they might elevate the spirit by subduing the flesh, but that they might acquire wholesome habits, and "have their bodies better fitted for all exercises of knightly and courtly grace." He was their intellectual director and father confessor, to whom they came and told all the deviations of which they had been guilty from the course of life

and study which he had laid down for them. His disciples went forth and preached to others the glories of their master, and stirred up sluggish souls to intellectual efforts. Here is a letter of one of Vittorino's zealous converts, Sassuolo da Prato:—
 "Let two things only be abolished, first bad masters, who being themselves ignorant of liberal arts, necessarily cannot teach them to others: secondly, those parents, the plagues of children, who, blinded by the most unworthy desires, are unable to see the brilliancy of virtue. For how few fathers are there in this our day who take their sons to school, with no other object than that they may come back really better! Every one despises literary culture, admires and loves law and medicine as the means best adapted for making money. The study of literature, they assert, is simply a short-cut to ruin. Nor is this only the opinion of the ignorant multitude; but, what is more grievous to be borne, philosophers, themselves teachers of wisdom and instillers of virtue, allow their pupils to turn their attention to any source of sordid gain, to any servile task, rather than spend their time on liberalizing studies. Oh, wretched times! oh, age—would that I could call it iron, but it produces nothing but softness, languor, and effeminacy! But it is useless to storm. The recovery of the parents is desperate, as their disease is inveterate. But let us rather admonish and exhort youths who are fired with zeal for letters and virtue, to hold firm to the belief that natural affection itself requires them to oppose the wishes of parents such as these, and to hold to virtue. If they take my advice, they will shun not only all intercourse with their parents, but even their eye, as though it were a basilisk's, and will betake themselves instead to the excellent Vittorino, the common father of all studies. By him, let them trust me, they will be received with such hospitable liberality that they will feel no further regret for relatives or home. Moreover they will have all the opportunities of study which they can desire, first, store of books, then teachers, both of Latin and Greek, not only Vittorino himself, but many others able and

erudite, from whom they may learn oratory, mathematics, and philosophy."

We seem to hear a pupil of a new St. Francis preaching to all enthusiastic youths that they should break through every natural tie, and embrace the higher life of literary culture which this great teacher has to set before them.

In the same tone of respectful reverence does the pleasant Florentine biographer of the worthies of the fifteenth century, Vespasiano da Bisticci, speak of him :—

"Vittorino's sole employment was to show to others the admirable example of his own life, to exhort and rouse all to a life of good habits, showing them that all things that we do in this world ought to be done that we may so live as to receive in the end the fruits of our labours. He was not content to give, solely for the love of God, what he had gained by his own sweat and toil, but he laboured that others

might do likewise. Poor boys, whom he undertook to educate, he not only taught for the love of God, but supported in all their needs ; nor was it enough that he should spend his own salary in so doing, but every year, to supply their wants, himself went forth as a beggar. Almighty God, how great a light of Thy grace had Vittorino, who, having read the words of Thy Holy Gospel, 'Give and it shall be given,' not only did it with his substance, leaving himself nothing, but laboured that others should do the same."

Such was Vittorino da Feltre, a true Saint of the Renaissance, who combined all the breadth and fulness of the new culture with all the zeal of the old faith, and by a life of cultivated asceticism and reflective self-denial, laboured to stamp upon the minds of his disciples the impress of his own character, the breadth and fervour of his own knowledge.

M. CREIGHTON.

JOHN KNOX AND HIS RELATIONS TO WOMEN.

II.—PRIVATE LIFE.

To those who know Knox by hearsay only, I believe the matter of this paper will be somewhat astonishing. For the hard energy of the man in all public matters has possessed the imagination of the world; he remains for posterity in certain traditional phases, browbeating Queen Mary, or breaking beautiful carved work in abbeys and cathedrals, that had long smoked themselves out and were no more than sorry ruins, while he was still quietly teaching children in a country gentleman's family. It does not consist with the common acceptance of his character to fancy him much moved, except with anger. And yet the language of passion came to his pen as readily, whether it was a passion of denunciation against some of the abuses that vexed his righteous spirit, or of yearning for the society of an absent friend. He was vehement in affection, as in doctrine. I will not deny that there may have been, along with his vehemence, something shifty, and for the moment only; that, like many men, and many Scotchmen, he saw the world and his own heart, not so much under any very steady, equable light, as by extreme flashes of passion, true for the moment, but not true in the long run. There does seem to me to be something of this traceable in the Reformer's utterances: precipitation and repentance, hardy speech and action somewhat circumspect, a strong tendency to see himself in a heroic light and to place a ready belief in the disposition of the moment. Withal he had considerable confidence in himself, and in the uprightness of his own disciplined emotions, underlying much sincere aspiration after spiritual humility. And it is this confidence that makes his intercourse with women so interesting to a modern. It would be easy, of course, to make fun of the

whole affair, to picture him strutting vaingloriously among these inferior creatures, or compare a religious friendship in the sixteenth century with what was called, I think, a literary friendship in the eighteenth. But it is more just and profitable to recognize what there is sterling and human underneath all his theoretical affectations of superiority. Women, he has said in his *First Blast*, are "weak, frail, impatient, feeble, and foolish;" and yet it does not appear that he was himself any less dependent than other men upon the sympathy and affection of these weak, frail, impatient, feeble, and foolish creatures; it seems even as if he had been rather more dependent than most.

Of those who are to act influentially on their fellows, we should expect always something large and public in their way of life, something more or less urbane and comprehensive in their sentiment for others. We should not expect to see them spend their sympathy in idylls, however beautiful. We should not seek them among those who, if they have but a wife to their bosom, ask no more of womankind, just as they ask no more of their own sex, if they can find a friend or two for their immediate need. They will be quick to feel all the pleasures of our association: not the great ones alone, but all. They will know not love only, but all those other ways in which man and woman mutually make each other happy—by sympathy, by admiration, by the atmosphere they bear about them—down to the mere impersonal pleasure of passing happy faces in the street. For through all this gradation, the difference of sex makes itself pleasurably felt. Down to the most lukewarm courtesies of life, there is a special chivalry due and a special pleasure received, when the two sexes are brought ever so lightly into contact. We love our mothers otherwise than we

love our fathers ; a sister is not as a brother to us ; and friendship between man and woman, be it never so unalloyed and innocent, is not the same as friendship between man and man. Such friendship is not even possible for all. To conjoin tenderness for a woman that is not far short of passionate with such disinterestedness and beautiful gratuity of affection as there is between friends of the same sex, requires no ordinary disposition in the man. For either it would presuppose quite womanly delicacy of perception, and, as it were, a curiosity in shades of differing sentiment ; or it would mean that he had accepted the large, simple divisions of society : a strong and positive spirit robustly virtuous, who has chosen a better part coarsely, and holds to it steadfastly, with all its consequences of pain to himself and others ; as one who should go straight before him on a journey, neither tempted by wayside flowers nor very scrupulous of small lives under foot. It was in virtue of this latter disposition that Knox was capable of those intimacies with women that embellished his life ; and we find him preserved for us in old letters as a man of many women friends ; a man of some expansion toward the other sex ; a man ever ready to comfort weeping women, and to weep along with them.

Of such scraps and fragments of evidence as to his private life and more intimate thoughts as have survived to us from all the perils that environ written paper, an astonishingly large proportion is in the shape of letters to women of his familiarity. He was twice married, but that is not greatly to the purpose ; for the Turk, who thinks even more meanly of women than John Knox, is none the less given to marrying. What is really significant is quite apart from marriage. For the man Knox was a true man, and woman, the *ewig-weibliche*, was as necessary to him, in spite of all low theories, as ever she was to Goethe. He came to her in a certain halo of his own, as the minister of truth, just as Goethe came to her in a glory of art : he made himself necessary to troubled

hearts and minds exercised in the painful complications that naturally result from all changes in the world's way of thinking ; and those whom he had thus helped became dear to him, and were made the chosen companions of his leisure if they were at hand, or encouraged and comforted by letter if they were afar.

It must not be forgotten that Knox had been a presbyter of the old Church ; and that the many women whom we shall see gathering around him, as he goes through life, had probably been accustomed, while still in the communion of Rome, to rely much upon some chosen spiritual director, so that the intimacies of which I propose to offer some account, while testifying to a good heart in the Reformer, testify also to a certain survival of the spirit of the confessional in the Reformed Church, and are not properly to be judged without this idea. There is no friendship so noble, but it is the product of the time ; and a world of little finical observances, and little frail proprieties and fashions of the hour, go to make or to mar, to stint or to perfect, the union of spirits the most loving, and the most intolerant of such interference. The trick of the country and the age steps in even between the mother and her child, counts out their caresses upon niggardly fingers and says, in the voice of authority, that this one thing shall be a matter of confidence between them, and this other thing shall not. And thus it is that we must take into reckoning whatever tended to modify the social atmosphere, in which Knox and his women friends met, and loved and trusted each other. To the man who had been their priest and was now their minister, women would be able to speak with a confidence quite impossible in these latter days : the women would be able to speak, and the man to hear. It was a beaten road just then ; and I daresay we should be no less scandalised at their plain speech than they, if they could come back to earth, would be offended at our waltzes and worldly fashions. This, then, was the footing on which Knox stood with

his many women friends. The reader will see, as he goes on, how much of warmth, of interest, and of that happy mutual dependence which is the very gist of friendship, he contrived to ingraft upon this somewhat dry relationship of penitent and confessor.

It must be understood that we know nothing of his intercourse with women (as indeed we know little at all about his life) until he came to Berwick in 1549, when he was already in the forty-fifth year of his age. At the same time it is just possible that some of a little group at Edinburgh, with whom he corresponded during his last absence, may have been friends of an older standing. Certainly they were, of all his female correspondents, the least personally favoured. He treats them throughout in a comprehensive sort of spirit, that must at times have been a little wounding. Thus, he remits one of them to his former letters, "which I trust be common betwixt you and the rest of our sisters, for to me ye are all equal in Christ."¹ Another letter is a gem in this way. "Albeit," it begins, "albeit I have no particular matter to write unto you, beloved sister, yet I could not refrain to write these few lines to you in declaration of my remembrance of you. True it is that I have many whom I bear in equal remembrance before God with you, to whom at present I write nothing, either for that I esteem them stronger than you, and therefore they need the less my rude labours, or else because they have not provoked me by their writing to recompense their remembrance."² His "sisters in Edinburgh" had evidently to "provoke" his attention pretty constantly; nearly all his letters are, on the face of them, answers to questions, and the answers are given with a certain crudity that I do not find repeated when he writes to those he really cares for. So when they consult him about women's apparel (a subject on which his opinion may be pretty correctly imagined by the ingenious reader for himself) he takes occasion to anticipate some of the most offensive

matter of the *First Blast* in a style of real brutality.³ It is not merely that he tells them "the garments of women do declare their weakness and inability to execute the office of man," though that in itself is neither very wise nor very opportune in such a correspondence, one would think; but if the reader will take the trouble to wade through the long, tedious sermon for himself, he will see proof enough that Knox neither loved, nor very deeply respected, the women he was then addressing. In very truth, I believe these Edinburgh sisters simply bored him. He had a certain interest in them as his children in the Lord; they were continually "provoking him by their writing;" and, if they handed his letters about, writing to them was as good a form of publication as was then open to him in Scotland. There is one letter, however, in this budget, addressed to the wife of Clerk-Register Mackgil, which is worthy of some further mention. The Clerk-Register had not opened his heart, it would appear, to the preaching of the Gospel, and Mrs. Mackgil has written, seeking the Reformer's prayers in his behalf. "Your husband," he answers, "is dear to me for that he is a man indued with some good gifts, but more dear, for that he is your husband. Charity moveth me to thirst his illumination, both for his comfort and for the trouble which you sustain by his coldness, which justly may be called infidelity." He wishes her, however, not to hope too much; he can promise that his prayers will be earnest, but not that they will be effectual; it is possible that this is to be her "cross" in life; that "her head, appointed by God for her comfort, should be her enemy." And if this be so, well, there is nothing for it: "with patience she must abide God's merciful deliverance," taking heed only that she does not "obey manifest iniquity for the pleasure of any mortal man."⁴ I conceive this epistle would have given a very modified sort of pleasure to the Clerk-Register, had it

¹ Works, iv. 244.

² Works, iv. 246.

³ Works, iv. 225.

⁴ Works, iv. 245.

chanced to fall into his hands. Compare its tenour—the dry resignation not without a hope of merciful deliverance, therein recommended—with these words from another letter, written but the year before to two married women of London: “Call first for grace by Jesus, and thereafter communicate with your faithful husbands, and then shall God, I doubt not, conduct your footsteps, and direct your counsels to His glory.”¹ Here the husbands are put in a very high place; we can recognize here the same hand that has written for our instruction how the man is set above the woman, even as God above the angels. But the point of the distinction is plain. For Clerk-Register Mackgil was not a faithful husband; displayed, indeed, towards religion a “coldness which justly might be called infidelity.” We shall see in more notable instances, how much Knox’s conception of the duty of wives varies according to the zeal and orthodoxy of the husband.

As I have said, he may possibly have made the acquaintance of Mrs. Mackgil, Mrs. Guthrie, or some other, or all, of these Edinburgh friends, while he was still Douglas of Longniddry’s private tutor. But our certain knowledge begins in 1549. He was then but newly escaped from his captivity in France, after pulling an oar for nineteen months on the benches of the galley *Nostre Dame*; now up the rivers, holding stealthy intercourse with other Scottish prisoners in the castle of Rouen; now out in the North Sea, raising his sick head to catch a glimpse of the far-off steeples of St. Andrews. And now he was sent down by the English Privy Council as a preacher to Berwick-upon-Tweed; somewhat shaken in health by all his hardships, full of pains and agues, and tormented by gravel, that sorrow of great men: altogether, what with his romantic story, his weak health, and his great faculty of eloquence, a very natural object for the sympathy of devout women. At this happy juncture he fell into the company of a Mrs. Elizabeth Bowes, wife of

Richard Bowes, of Aske, in Yorkshire, to whom she had borne twelve children. She was a religious hypochondriac, a very weariful woman, full of doubts and scruples, and giving no rest on earth either to herself or to those whom she honoured with her confidence. From the first time she heard Knox preach she formed a high opinion of him, and was solicitous, ever after, of his society.² Nor was Knox unresponsive. “I have always delighted in your company,” he writes, “and when labours would permit, you know I have not spared hours to talk and commune with you.” Often when they had met in depression, he reminds her, “God hath sent great comfort unto both.”³ We can gather from such letters as are yet extant, how close and continuous was their intercourse. “I think it best you remain till the morrow,” he writes once, “and so shall we commune at large at afternoon. This day you know to be the day of my study and prayer unto God; yet if your trouble be intolerable, or if you think my presence may release your pain, do as the Spirit shall move you . . . Your messenger found me in bed, after a sore trouble and most dolorous night; and so dolour may complain to dolour when we two meet. . . . And this is more plain than ever I spoke, to let you know you have a companion in trouble.”⁴ Once, we have the curtain raised for a moment, and can look at the two together, for the length of a phrase. “After the writing of this preceding,” writes Knox, “your brother and mine, Harrie Wycliffe, did advertise me by writing, that your adversary (the devil) took occasion to trouble you because that *I did start back from you rehearsing your infirmities. I remember myself so to have done, and that is my common consuetude when anything pierceth or toucheth my heart. Call to your mind what I did standing at the cupboard at Alnwick.* In very deed I thought that no creature had been tempted as I was; and when I heard proceed from your mouth

¹ Works, vi. 514.² Works, iii. 338.⁴ Works, iii. 352, 353.³ Works, iv. 221.

the very same words that he troubles me with, I did wonder and from my heart lament your sore trouble, knowing in myself the dolour thereof."¹ Now intercourse of so very close a description, whether it be religious intercourse or not, is apt to displease and disquiet a husband; and we know incidentally from Knox himself that there was some little scandal about his intimacy with Mrs. Bowes. "The slander and fear of men," he writes, "has impeded me to exercise my pen so oft as I would; yea, very shame hath holden me from your company, when I was most surely persuaded that God had appointed me at that time to comfort and feed your hungry and afflicted soul. God in His infinite mercy," he goes on, "remove not only from me all fear that tendeth not to godliness, but from others suspicion to judge of me otherwise than it becometh one member to judge of another."² And the scandal, such as it was, would not be allayed by the dissension in which Mrs. Bowes seems to have lived with her family upon the matter of religion, and the countenance shown by Knox to her resistance. Talking of these conflicts, and her courage against "her own flesh and most inward affections; yea, against some of her most natural friends," he writes it "to the praise of God, he has wondered at the bold constancy which he has found in her when his own heart was faint."³

Now, perhaps in order to stop scandalous mouths, perhaps out of a desire to bind the much-loved evangelist nearer to her in the only manner possible, Mrs. Bowes conceived the scheme of marrying him to her fifth daughter, Marjorie; and the Reformer seems to have fallen in with it readily enough. It seems to have been believed in the family, that the whole matter had been originally made up between these two, with no very spontaneous inclination on the part of the bride.⁴ Knox's idea of marriage, as I have said, was not the same for all men; but on the whole, it was not lofty. We have a curious letter

of his, written at the request of Queen Mary, to the Earl of Argyle, on very delicate household matters; which, as he tells us, "was not well accepted of the said Earl."⁵ We may suppose, however, that his own home was regulated in a similar spirit. I can fancy that for such a man, emotional, and with a need, now and again, to exercise parsimony in emotions not strictly needful, something a little mechanical, something hard and fast and clearly understood, would enter into his ideal of a home. There were storms enough without, and equability was to be desired at the fireside even at a sacrifice of deeper pleasures. So, from a wife, of all women, he would not ask much. One letter to her which has come down to us is, I had almost said, conspicuous for coldness.⁶ He calls her, as he called other female correspondents, "dearly beloved sister;" the epistle is doctrinal, and nearly the half of it bears, not upon her own case, but upon that of her mother. However, we know what Heine wrote in his wife's album; and there is, after all, one passage that may be held to intimate some tenderness, although even that admits of an amusingly opposite construction. "I think," he says, "I think this be the first letter I ever wrote to you." This, if we are to take it literally, may pair off with the "two or three children" whom Montaigne mentions having lost at nurse; the one is as eccentric in a lover as the other in a parent. Nevertheless, he displayed more energy in the course of his troubled wooing than might have been expected. The whole Bowes family, angry enough already at the influence he had obtained over the mother, set their faces obdurately against the match. And I daresay the opposition quickened his inclination. I find him writing to Mrs. Bowes that she need no further trouble herself about the marriage; it should now be his business altogether; it behoved him now to jeopard his life "for the comfort of his own flesh, both fear and friendship of all earthly creature laid aside."⁷

¹ Works, iii. 350.² Works, iii. 390, 391.³ Works, iii. 142.⁴ Works, iii. 378.⁵ Works, ii. 379.⁶ Works, iii. 394.⁷ Works, iii. 376.

This is a wonderfully chivalrous utterance for a Reformer forty-eight years old; and it compares well with the leaden coquetties of Calvin, not much over thirty, taking this and that into consideration, weighing together dowries and religious qualifications and the instability of friends, and exhibiting what M. Bungener calls "an honourable and Christian difficulty" of choice, in frigid indecisions and insincere proposals. But Knox's next letter is in a humbler tone; he has not found the negotiation so easy as he fancied; he despairs of the marriage altogether, and talks of leaving England,—regards not "what country" consumes his wicked carcass. "You shall understand," he says, "that this sixth of November, I spoke with Sir Robert Bowes" (the head of the family, his bride's uncle) "in the matter you know, according to your request; whose disdainful, yea, spiteful, words hath so pierced my heart that my life is bitter to me. I bear a good countenance with a sore troubled heart, because he that ought to consider matters with a deep judgment, is become not only a despoiser, but also a taunter of God's messengers—God be merciful unto him! Amongst others his most displeasing words, while that I was about to have declared my heart in the whole matter, he said, 'Away with your rhetorical reasons! for I will not be persuaded with them.' God knows I did use no rhetoric nor coloured speech; but would have spoken the truth, and that in most simple manner. I am not a good orator in my own cause; but what he would not be content to hear of me, God shall declare to him one day to his displeasure, unless he repent."¹ Poor Knox, you see, is quite comforted. It has been a very unpleasant interview. And as it is the only sample that we have of how things went with him during his courtship, we may infer that the period was not as agreeable for Knox as it has been for some others.

However, when once they were married, I imagine he and Marjorie Bowes hit it off together comfortably enough.

¹ Works, iii. 378.

The little we know of it may be brought together in a very short space. She bore him two sons. He seems to have kept her pretty busy, and depended on her to some degree in his work; so that when she fell ill, his papers got at once into disorder.² Certainly she sometimes wrote to his dictation; and, in this capacity, he calls her "his left hand."³ In June 1559, at the headiest moment of the Reformation in Scotland, he writes regretting the absence of his helpful colleague, Goodman, "whose presence" (this is the not very grammatical form of his lament) "whose presence I more thirst, than she that is my own flesh."⁴ And this, considering the source and the circumstances, may be held as evidence of a very tender sentiment. He tells us himself in his history, on the occasion of a certain meeting at the Kirk of Field, that "he was in no small heaviness by reason of the late death of his dear bedfellow, Marjorie Bowes."⁵ Calvin, condoling with him, speaks of her as "a wife whose like is not to be found everywhere" (that is very like Calvin), and again, as "the most delightful of wives." We know what Calvin thought desirable in a wife, "good humour, chastity, thrift, patience and solicitude for her husband's health," and so we may suppose that the first Mrs. Knox fell not far short of this ideal.

The actual date of the marriage is uncertain; but by September 1566, at the latest, the Reformer was settled in Geneva with his wife. There is no fear either that he will be dull; even if the chaste, thrifty, patient Marjorie should not altogether occupy his mind, he need not go out of the house to seek more female sympathy; for behold! Mrs. Bowes is duly domesticated with the young couple. Dr. Mc'Crie imagined that Richard Bowes was now dead, and his widow, consequently, free to live where she would; and where could she go more naturally than to the house of a married daughter? This, however, is not the case. Richard Bowes did not die till at least two

² Works, vi. 104.

³ Works, v. 5.

⁴ Works, vi. 27.

⁵ Works, ii. 138.

years later. It is impossible to believe that he approved of his wife's desertion, after so many years of marriage, after twelve children had been born to them; and accordingly we find in his will, dated 1558, no mention either of her or of Knox's wife.¹ This is plain sailing. It is easy enough to understand the anger of Bowes against this interloper, who had come into a quiet family, married the daughter in spite of the father's opposition, alienated the wife from the husband and the husband's religion, supported her in a long course of resistance and rebellion, and, after years of intimacy, already too close and tender for any jealous spirit to behold without resentment, carried her away with him at last into a foreign land. But it is not quite easy to understand how, except out of sheer weariness and disgust, he was ever brought to agree to the arrangement. Nor is it easy to square the Reformer's conduct with his public teaching. We have, for instance, a letter addressed by him, Craig and Spottiswood, to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, anent "a wicked and rebellious woman," one Anne Good, spouse to "John Barron, a minister of Christ Jesus his evangel," who, "after great rebellion shown unto him, and divers admonitions given, as well by himself as by others in his name, that she should in no wise depart from this realm, nor from his house without his license, hath not the less stubbornly and rebelliously departed, separated herself from his society, left his house, and withdrawn herself from this realm."² Perhaps some sort of license was extorted, as I have said, from Richard Bowes, weary with years of domestic dissension; but, setting that aside, the words employed with so much righteous indignation by Knox, Craig and Spottiswood, to describe the conduct of that wicked and rebellious woman, Mrs. Barron, would describe nearly as exactly the conduct of the religious Mrs. Bowes. It is a little bewildering, until we recol-

lect the distinction between faithful and unfaithful husbands; for Barron was "a minister of Christ Jesus his evangel," while Richard Bowes, besides being own brother to a despiser and taunter of God's messengers, is shrewdly suspected to have been "a bigoted adherent of the Roman Catholic faith," or, as Knox himself would have expressed it, "a rotten Papist."

You would have thought that Knox was now pretty well supplied with female society. But we are not yet at the end of the roll. The last year of his sojourn in England had been spent principally in London, where he was resident as one of the chaplains of Edward the Sixth; and here he boasts, although a stranger, he had, by God's grace, found favour before many.³ The godly women of the metropolis made much of him; once he writes to Mrs. Bowes that her last letter had found him closeted with three, and he and the three women were all in tears.⁴ Out of all, however, he had chosen two. "God," he writes to them, "*brought us in such familiar acquaintance, that your hearts were incensed and kindled with a special care over me, as the mother useth to be over her natural child; and my heart was opened and compelled in your presence to be more plain than ever I was to any.*"⁵ And out of the two even he had chosen one, Mrs. Anne Locke, wife to Mr. Harry Locke, merchant, nigh to Bow Kirk, Cheapside, in London, as the address runs. If one may venture to judge upon such imperfect evidence, this was the woman he loved best. I have a difficulty in quite forming to myself an idea of her character. She may have been one of the three tearful visitors before alluded to; she may even have been that one of them who was so profoundly moved by some passages of Mrs. Bowes's letter, which the Reformer opened, and read aloud to them before they went. "O would to God," cried this impressionable matron, "would to God that I might speak with that person, for I perceive

¹ Mr. Laing's preface to the sixth volume of Knox's Works, p. lxii.

² Works, vi. 534.

³ Works, iv. 220.

⁴ Works, iii. 380.

⁵ Works, iv. 220.

there are more tempted than I."¹ This may have been Mrs. Locke, as I say; but even if it were, we must not conclude from this one fact that she was such another as Mrs. Bowes. All the evidence tends the other way. She was a woman of understanding, plainly, who followed political events with interest, and to whom Knox thought it worth while to write, in detail, the history of his trials and successes. She was religious, but without that morbid perversity of spirit that made religion so heavy a burthen for the poor-hearted Mrs. Bowes. More of her I do not find, save testimony to the profound affection that united her to the Reformer. So we find him writing to her from Geneva, in such terms as these:—"You write that your desire is earnest to see me. *Dear sister, if I should express the thirst and languor which I have had for your presence, I should appear to pass measure. . . . Yea, I weep and rejoice in remembrance of you*; but that would vanish by the comfort of your presence, which I assure you is so dear to me, that if the charge of this little flock here, gathered together in Christ's name, did not impede me, my coming should prevent my letter."² I say that this was written from Geneva; and yet you will observe that it is no consideration for his wife or mother-in-law, only the charge of his little flock, that keeps him from setting out forthwith for London, to comfort himself with the dear presence of Mrs. Locke. Remember that was a certain plausible enough pretext for Mrs. Locke to come to Geneva—"the most perfect school of Christ that ever was on earth since the days of the Apostles"—for we are now under the reign of that "horrible monster Jezebel of England," when a lady of good orthodox sentiments was better out of London. It was doubtful, however, whether this was to be. She was detained in England, partly by circumstances unknown, "partly by empire of her head," Mr. Harry Locke, the Cheapside merchant. It is somewhat humorous to see Knox struggling for

resignation, now that he has to do with a faithful husband (for Mr. Harry Locke was faithful). Had it been otherwise, "in my heart," he says, "I could have wished—yea," here he breaks out, "yea, and cannot cease to wish—that God would guide you to this place."³ And after all, he had not long to wait, for, whether Mr. Harry Locke died in the interval, or was wearied, he too, into giving permission, five months after the date of the letter last quoted, "Mrs. Anne Locke, Harry her son, and Anne her daughter, and Katharine her maid," arrived in that perfect school of Christ, the Presbyterian paradise, Geneva. So now, and for the next two years, the cup of Knox's happiness was surely full. Of an afternoon, when the bells rang out for the sermon, the shops closed, and the good folk gathered to the churches, psalm-book in hand, we can imagine him drawing near to the English chapel in quite patriarchal fashion, with Mrs. Knox and Mrs. Bowes and Mrs. Locke, James his servant, Patrick his pupil, and a due following of children and maids. He might be alone at work all morning in his study, for he wrote much during these two years; but at night, you may be sure there was a circle of admiring women, eager to hear the new paragraph, and not sparing of applause. And what work, among others, was he elaborating at this time, but the notorious *First Blast*? So that he may have rolled out in his big pulpit voice, how women were weak, frail, impatient, feeble, foolish, inconstant, variable, cruel, and lacking the spirit of counsel, and how men were above them, even as God is above the angels, in the ears of his own wife, and the two dearest friends he had on earth. But he had lost the sense of incongruity, and continued to despise in theory the sex he honoured so much in practice, of whom he chose his most intimate associates, and whose courage he was compelled to wonder at, when his own heart was faint.

We may say that such a man was not worthy of his fortune; and so as he

¹ Works, iii. 380.

² Works, iv. 238.

³ Works, iv. 240.

would not learn, he was taken away from that agreeable school, and his fellowship of women was broken up, not to be reunited. Called into Scotland to take at last that strange position in history which is his best claim to commemoration, he was followed thither by his wife and his mother-in-law. The wife soon died. The death of her daughter did not altogether separate Mrs. Bowes from Knox, but she seems to have come and gone between his house and England. In 1562, however, we find him characterised as "a sole man by reason of the absence of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Bowes," and a passport is got for her, her man, a maid, and "three horses, whereof two shall return," as well as liberty to take all her own money with her into Scotland. This looks like a definitive arrangement; but whether she died at Edinburgh, or went back to England yet again, I cannot find. With that great family of hers, unless in leaving her husband she had quarrelled with them all, there must have been frequent occasion for her presence, one would think. Knox at least survived her; and we possess his epigraph to their long intimacy, given to the world by him in an appendix to his latest publication. I have said in a former paper that Knox was not shy of personal revelations in his published works. And the trick seems to have grown on him. To this last tract, a controversial onslaught on a Scottish Jesuit, he prefixed a prayer, not very pertinent to the matter in hand, and containing references to his family which were the occasion of some wit in his adversary's answer; and appended, what seems equally irrelevant, one of his devout letters to Mrs. Bowes, with an explanatory preface. To say truth, I believe he had always felt uneasily that the circumstances of this intimacy were very capable of misconstruction; and now, when he was an old man, taking "his good night of all the faithful in both realms," and only desirous "that without any notable slander to the evangel of Jesus Christ, he might end his battle; for as the world was

weary of him, so was he of it;" in such a spirit, it was not, perhaps, unnatural that he should return to this old story, and seek to put it right in the eyes of all men, ere he died. "Because that God," he says, "because that God now in His mercy hath put an end to the battle of my dear mother, Mistress Elizabeth Bowes, before that He put an end to my wretched life, I could not cease but declare to the world what was the cause of our great familiarity and long acquaintance; which was neither flesh nor blood, but a troubled conscience upon her part, which never suffered her to rest but when she was in the company of the faithful, of whom (from the first hearing of the word at my mouth) she judged me to be one. . . . Her company to me was comfortable (yea, honourable and profitable, for she was to me and mine a mother), but yet it was not without some cross; for besides trouble and fashery of body sustained for her, my mind was seldom quiet, for doing somewhat for the comfort of her troubled conscience."¹ He had written to her years before, from his first exile in Dieppe, that "only God's hand" could withhold him from once more speaking with her face to face; and now, when God's hand has indeed interposed, when there lies between them, instead of the voyageable straits, that great gulf over which no man can pass, this is the spirit in which he can look back upon their long acquaintance. She was a religious hypochondriac, it appears, whom, not without some cross and fashery of mind and body, he was good enough to tend. He might have given a truer character of their friendship, had he thought less of his own standing in public estimation, and more of the dead woman. But he was in all things, as Burke said of his son in that ever memorable passage, a public creature. He wished that even into this private place of his affections posterity should follow him with a complete approval; and he was willing, in order that this

¹ Works, vi. 513, 514.

might be so, to exhibit the defects of his lost friend, and tell the world what weariness he had sustained through her unhappy disposition. There is something here that reminds one of Rousseau.

I do not think he ever saw Mrs. Locke after he left Geneva; but his correspondence with her continued for three years. It may have continued longer, of course, but I think the last letters we possess read like the last that would be written. Perhaps Mrs. Locke was then remarried, for there is much obscurity over her subsequent history. For as long as their intimacy was kept up, at least, the human element remains in the Reformer's life. Here is one passage, for example, the most likable utterance of Knox's that I can quote:—Mrs. Locke has been upbraiding him as a bad correspondent. "My remembrance of you," he answers, "is not so dead, but I trust it shall be fresh enough, albeit it be renewed by no outward token for one year. *Of nature, I am churlish; yet one thing I ashamed not to affirm, that familiarity once thoroughly contracted, was never yet broken on my default. The cause may be that I have rather need of all, than that any hath need of me. However it (that) be, it cannot be, as I say, the corporal absence of one year or two that can quench in my heart that familiar acquaintance in Christ Jesus, which half a year did engender, and almost two years did nourish and confirm. And therefore, whether I write or no, be assuredly persuaded that I have you in such memory as becometh the faithful to have of the faithful.*"¹ This is the truest touch of personal humility that I can remember to have seen in all the five volumes of the Reformer's collected works: it is no small honour to Mrs. Locke, that his affection for her should have brought home to him: this unwonted feeling of dependence upon others. Everything else in the course of the correspondence testifies to a good, sound, downright sort of friendship between the two, less ecstatic than it was at first, perhaps,

but serviceable and very equal. He gives her ample details as to the progress of the work of reformation; sends her the sheets of the "Confession of Faith," "in quairs," as he calls it; asks her to assist him with her prayers, to collect money for the good cause in Scotland, and to send him books for himself—books by Calvin especially, one on Isaiah, and a new revised edition of the "Institutes." "I must be bold on your liberality," he writes, "not only in that, but in greater things as I shall need."² On her part, she applies to him for spiritual advice; not after the manner of the drooping Mrs. Bowes, but in a more positive spirit; advice as to practical points, advice as to the Church of England, for instance, whose ritual he condemns as a "mingle-mangle."³ Just at the end, she ceases to write, sends him "a token, without writing." "I understand your impediment," he answers, "and therefore I cannot complain. Yet if you understood the variety of my temptations, I doubt not but you would have written somewhat."⁴ One letter more, and then silence.

And I think the best of the Reformer died out with that correspondence. It is after this, of course, that he wrote that ungenerous description of his intercourse with Mrs. Bowes. It is after this, also, that we come to the unlovely episode of his second marriage. He had been left a widower at the age of fifty-five. Three years after, it occurred apparently to yet another pious parent to sacrifice a child upon the altar of his respect for the Reformer. In January 1563, Randolph writes to Cecil: "Your Honour will take it for a great wonder when I shall write unto you that Mr. Knox shall marry a very near kinswoman of the Duke's, a Lord's daughter, a young lass not above sixteen years of age."⁵ He adds that he fears he will be laughed at for reporting so mad a story. And yet it was true; and on Palm Sunday, 1564, Margaret Stewart, daughter of Andrew Lord Stewart of

² Works, vi. pp. 21, 101, 108, 130.

³ Works, vi. 83.

⁴ Works, vi. 129.

⁵ Works, vi. 532.

¹ Works, vi. 11.

Ochiltree, aged seventeen, was duly united to John Knox, Minister of St. Giles's Kirk, Edinburgh, aged fifty-nine: to the great disgust of Queen Mary from family pride, and I would fain hope of many others for more humane considerations. "In this," as Randolph says, "I wish he had done otherwise." The Consistory of Geneva, "that most perfect school of Christ that ever was on earth since the days of the Apostles," were wont to forbid marriages on the ground of too great a disproportion in age. I cannot help wondering whether the old Reformer's conscience did not uneasily remind him, now and again, of this good custom of his religious metropolis, as he thought of the two-and-forty years that separated him from his poor bride. Fittingly enough, we hear nothing of the second Mrs. Knox until she appears at her husband's deathbed, eight years after. She bore him three daughters in the interval; and I suppose the poor child's martyrdom was made as easy for her as might be. She was "extremely attentive to him" at the end, we read; and he seems to have spoken to her with some confidence. Moreover, and this is very characteristic, he had copied out for her use a little volume of his own devotional letters to other women.

This is the end of the roll, unless we add to it Mrs. Adamson, who had delighted much in his company "by reason that she had a troubled conscience," and whose deathbed is commemorated at some length in the pages of his history.¹

And now, looking back, it cannot be said that Knox's intercourse with women was quite of the highest sort. It is characteristic that we find him more alarmed for his own reputation, than for the reputation of the women with whom he was familiar. There was a fatal preponderance of self in all his intimacies: many women came to learn from him, but he never condescended to become a learner in his turn. And so there is not anything idyllic in these intimacies of his; and they were never so reno-

vating to his spirit as they might have been. But I believe they were good enough for the women. I fancy the women knew what they were about when so many of them followed after Knox. It is not simply because a man is always fully persuaded that he knows the right from the wrong and sees his way plainly through the maze of life, great qualities as these are, that people will love and follow him, and write him letters full of their "earnest desire for him" when he is absent. It is not over a man, whose one characteristic is grim fixity of purpose, that the hearts of women are "incensed and kindled with a special care," as it were over their natural children. In the strong quiet patience of all his letters to the weariful Mrs. Bowes, we may perhaps see one cause of the fascination he possessed for these religious women. Here was one whom you could besiege all the year round with inconsistent scruples and complaints; you might write to him on Thursday that you were so elated it was plain the devil was deceiving you, and again on Friday that you were so depressed it was plain God had cast you off for ever; and he would read all this patiently and sympathetically, and give you an answer in the most reassuring polysyllables, and all divided into heads—who knows?—like a treatise on divinity. And then, those easy tears of his. There are some women who like to see men crying; and here was this great-voiced, bearded man of God, who might be seen beating the solid pulpit every Sunday, and casting abroad his clamorous denunciations to the terror of all, and who on the Monday would sit in their parlours by the hour, and weep with them over their manifold trials and temptations. Now-a-days, he would have to drink a dish of tea with all these penitents. . . . It sounds a little vulgar: as the past will do, if we look into it too closely. We could not let these great folk of old into our drawing-rooms. Queen Elizabeth would positively not be eligible for a housemaid. The old manners and the old customs go sinking from grade to

¹ Works, i. 246.

grade, until, if some mighty emperor revisited the glimpses of the moon, he would not find anyone of his way of thinking, anyone he could strike hands with and talk to freely and without offence, save perhaps the porter at the end of the street, or the fellow with his elbows out who loafs all day before the public-house. So that this little note of vulgarity is not a thing to be dwelt upon: it is to be put away from us, as we recall the fashion of these old intimacies; so that we may only remember Knox as one who was very long-suffering with women, kind to them in his own way, loving them in his own way—and that not the worst way, if it was not the best—and once at least, if not twice, moved to his heart of hearts by a woman, and giving expression to the yearning he had for her society in words that none of us need be ashamed to borrow.

And let us bear in mind always, that the period I have gone over in this essay begins when the Reformer was already beyond the middle age, and already broken in bodily health: it has been the story of an old man's friendships. This it is that makes Knox enviable. Unknown until past forty, he had then before him five-and-thirty

years of splendid and influential life, passed through uncommon hardships to an uncommon degree of power, lived in his own country as a sort of king, and did what he would with the sound of his voice out of the pulpit. And besides all this, such a following of faithful women! One would take the first forty years gladly, if one could be sure of the last thirty. Most of us, even if, by reason of great strength and the dignity of grey hairs, we retain some degree of public respect in the latter days of our existence, will find a falling away of friends, and a solitude making itself round about us day by day, until we are left alone with the hired sick-nurse. For the attraction of a man's character is apt to be outlived, like the attraction of his body; and the power to love grows feeble in its turn, as well as the power to inspire love in others. It is only with a few rare natures that friendship is added to friendship, love to love, and the man keeps growing richer in affection—richer, I mean, as a bank may be said to grow richer, both giving and receiving more—after his head is white and his back weary, and he prepares to go down into the dust of death.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

TORQUATO TASSO: HIS LIFE AND WORKS.

PART II.

FROM Rome Tasso was summoned by Alfonso II. d'Este, the brother of his late patron, to the ducal court of Ferrara. The duke, as we have already seen, desired, in the first instance, to retain him as one of the gentlemen of his court; on the other hand, it had long been the object of Tasso's ambition to be admitted into his service. He had endeavoured to obtain his wish through the influence of various powerful friends, and he attributed his success to the influence of the Princess Lucrezia, now Duchess of Urbino, and to her sister Leonora.

The gratitude which he felt on this occasion—alas, how soon to be cancelled!—is recorded in his letter to his friend Scipio Gonzaga: "He (that is, Alfonso) took me out of a state of misery and obscurity, and set me in the light and splendour of his court. Raising me from poverty, he placed me in a position of ease and comfort, declaring me to be worthy of every distinction, inviting me to sit at his table, and admitting me into the intimacy of his private life. Nor was any favour that I asked of him ever denied me."¹

Again, the passage in the "Aminta" is meant as another graceful acknowledgment of his gratitude. The "Uom d'aspetto magnanimo e robusto," who stood on the threshold of the "felice albergo," and with "real cortesia" invited Tirsi to enter, is doubtless intended for Alfonso, while Tirsi, who cannot decide whether the title of "Duce or Cavaliero" best befits his courteous host, is meant to represent himself. "Ei grande e'n pregio, me negletto e basso."²

But there is also another passage (act i. sc. 2) which tells us a different

tale, picturing the evils of a court life, and the persecutions to which he was subject.

Tasso was admitted into the duke's household in 1573. In 1579 the calamity overtook him which darkened the rest of his life—which precipitated him from the height of happiness to the depth of misery, and has ever since made him an object of the tenderest compassion. It is by no means an easy task to trace the beginning of his misfortunes. Many of his early biographers, in their anxiety to shield the house of Este, give a purposely confused account of their origin. But later accounts tear away this flimsy veil, and reveal the treacherous cruelty which lurks behind it. During the first three years his life was peaceful and happy. He wrote his "Aminta," a pastoral drama, composed in two months' time, so perfect, says Muratori, that it left no chance to posterity of ever surpassing it. All the former Pastorali—the "Sacrificio" of Beccari, the "Aretusa" of Lollio, the "Sfortunato" of Argenti—appeared as the roughest sketches of that species of composition beside the polished beauties of the "Aminta," which will always remain as a gem in the Italian language for graceful elegance of diction and purity of style. Parini considered that in it Tasso had succeeded in engrafting the choicest specimens of Italian ideas and language on the ancient beauties of the Grecian stock. He is especially happy in his "cori," which are masterpieces of vigorous style, and each individual specimen in itself a perfect piece of poetry. Take for example the one at the end of the second act, beginning—

"Amore, in quale scuola,
Da qual mastro s'apprende,
La tua sì lunga e dubbia arte d'amare?"

Yet Tasso himself never thought very highly of the "eclogue," as he called

¹ Maffei, *Storia della Lett. Ital.* vol. i. p. 300.

² *Aminta*, act i. scene 2.

the "Aminta," nor did he take any steps to have it published. It was not printed until after the control of his works had passed out of his hands during his imprisonment. At that time (1580) it was printed at the Aldine Press, with a preface by Aldo il giovane, in which he laments with much feeling the sad condition of "Il Signor Torquato."¹

The "Aminta" was represented with great splendour at the court of Ferrara in 1573; again a few years later at Mantua, when the artist and architect Buontalenti painted the scenery, and the Duchess of Urbino summoned Tasso to her court that she might hear the famous "Pastorale" from the lips of the author.

Tasso made a happy sojourn there of a few months, and during that time he wrote a sonnet (one of his most finished productions), "Negli anni acerbi tuoi, purpurea Rosa," to the duchess, now in her fortieth year. Lucrezia rewarded his graceful compliments with a collar of gold and a valuable ruby, presents which afterwards, in his great poverty, he was obliged to barter for money.

Tasso's next care was to finish his great epic poem, which was eagerly looked for throughout Italy. In his anxiety to give to his country as perfect a production as possible, he consulted all his friends upon various passages of the poem, making journeys to Padua, Bologna, Rome, Sienna, and Florence, omitting no opportunity of gaining assistance in his task from all the learned men he knew. Thus portions of the poem would pass from hand to hand, till the printers somehow or other gained possession of them and surreptitiously printed them, to the great annoyance of Tasso, before the whole work was complete. In this manner, now two cantos, now four at a time, appeared in various cities of Italy, but even in this imperfect state they were received with enthusiastic applause.

At length, in 1575, the first complete edition of the poem was published, and throughout the literary "Accademie" and circles of Italy nothing else was discussed, while comparisons were imme-

diately instituted between the "Gerusalemme" of Tasso and the "Orlando Furioso" of Ariosto. A greater mistake could hardly have been made, for it is obvious that there is an essential difference between the two poems. Tiraboschi observes that you might as well compare the "Æneid" of Virgil with Ovid's "Metamorphoses;" but of this a few more words will be said at the end of the paper. It is only mentioned here because it was the first cause of the fierce attacks of the Accademia della Crusca, which so vexed and wounded the sensitive spirit of Tasso, the first cloud which announced the storm of trouble about to burst over his devoted head.

On his return to Ferrara in 1576 the duke appointed him biographer of the house of Este, in place of his former secretary Pigna, who from that time forward became his bitter enemy, and stirred up the jealousy and malice of the other courtiers to show itself in open persecution. Tasso's letters were opened and intercepted, and his papers stolen.

Notwithstanding their petty intrigues and jealousies, they had not as yet succeeded in poisoning the duke's ear against him, and he stood as high as ever in the favour of the court. The princesses continued to show him every mark of esteem. Leonora, in order to distract him from these harassing vexations and troubles, invited him to her villa at Consandoli, on the borders of the Po, about eighteen miles from Ferrara. Soothed by her kindness, and happy in her presence, he put the finishing touches to the episode of Erminia,² one of the favourite passages of his poem. He was never tired of polishing and repolishing this cherished work of his genius, and, far from having sanctioned the edition published in 1575, he complained bitterly that the poem had been fraudulently snatched from his hands before it was complete, and persuaded the duke to write to the Pope, to the Republic of Genoa, the Duke of Parma, and many other Italian princes, to prohibit the publication of the poem without his sanction. Up to this

¹ Tasso, *Opere*, vol. ii. p. 10.

² *Gerusalemme Liberata*, c. vii.

period he seems to have succeeded in concealing from every one his passion for Leonora, although, to those who are now aware of his secret, the thought of her seems to pervade all his writings, and appears under some form or another in all the varied productions of his poetical genius.¹

But on his return from Consandoli, in an unguarded moment he confided the first hint of his secret to one of the courtiers—Maddalò by name—whom he trusted and believed to be his friend. Maddalò proved himself instead to be a traitor of the blackest dye. Tasso became aware of his treachery—a quarrel and a duel ensued. The cowardly traitor brought his two brothers with him, and all three set simultaneously upon Tasso.

But Tasso, not unlike one of the brave heroes of his poem, proved himself more than a match for all his three enemies, so that they fled before him, and the streets of Ferrara resounded with the saying—

"Colla penna e colla spada
Nessun val quanto Torquato."

"Wield he the sword, or wield he the pen,
Torquato is greater than other men."

This skirmish had unhappily the effect of increasing his suspicions, and he sank into a state of melancholy from which nothing could divert him. He mistrusted everybody; he even began to doubt himself. He thought himself guilty of heresy—he feared his faith was not so firm as it ought to be—that his philosophical speculations had led him into error respecting the great truths of religion. Tormented and perplexed, he volunteered to go twice before the Inquisition at Bologna and Ferrara, and, although somewhat reassured, he was not satisfied, because absolution had not formally been administered to him. Then another apprehension assailed him, lest his enemies should take away his life either by poison or the sword. One of the attendants aroused his suspicion to

such an extent that he forgot himself so far as to draw his dagger upon him in the apartments of the Duchess of Urbino. For this action the duke caused him to be arrested, but more out of regard to his own safety than in punishment for the offence.

Up to this time the duke seems to have had patience with eccentricities and suspicions which might have aroused harsher feelings, for he soon set Tasso at liberty, and invited him to his villa at Belriguardo. It is here that Goethe lays the scene of his drama of "Tasso." But here, whether weary of the poet's importunities, or whether his malicious enemies first awakened in the duke's mind a suspicion of Tasso's passion for the princess, is not known; but Alfonso, as the only way of disposing of the unheard-of presumption that a gentleman of his court should dare to raise his eyes to one of the princesses of the house of Este, caused it to be intimated to Tasso that he should feign himself mad.

It was, indeed, no wonder that Tasso left Ferrara in indignation, recording the insult in the never-to-be-forgotten lines—

"Tor mi potevi, alto Signor, la vita,
Chè de' Sovrani è l'usurato diritto,
Ma tormi quel, che la bontà infinita
Senno mi diè, perchè d'amore ho scritto
(D'amore, a cui natura e il ciel m'invita),
E delitto maggior d'ogni delitto.
Perdon chiedi, tu mel negasti: addio:
Mi pento ognor del pentimento mio."

He fled away poor, footsore, wayworn, to his sister at Sorrento, to whom he first showed himself in the disguise of a shepherd, and, to try her affections, told her that her brother was far-off in peril of his life. When reassured, by her unfeigned grief, of her affection, he told her the truth, and she affectionately received him, striving by every means in her power to soothe his troubled mind.

While at Sorrento, Manso tells us that he received a twice-repeated summons back to Ferrara from "Madama Leonora." But it appears from Tasso's own letter to the Duca d'Urbino that

¹ The whole question has been ably treated by Professor Rosini in an essay upon the "Amore" del Tasso. *Opere del Tasso*, vol. 33.

the duke never invited him to return. Happier far would it have been for Tasso had he resisted the invitation; for although on his arrival at Ferrara he was received at court, Alfonso had not forgiven him. The poet's enemies continued to pour their malicious tales into his patron's ear. Tasso was never allowed a personal interview with the duke, and very soon the princesses were forbidden to receive him.

Again he fled from Ferrara to Mantua, to Urbino, to Torino, where, under the name of "Omero Fuggiguerra," he arrived in such a sad plight, that the keepers of the gates of the city would not have admitted him had not Ingegneri, the Venetian printer, who had printed sixteen cantos of the "*Gerusalemme*," recognised him, and announced who he was.

In vain did the Marchese Filippo d'Este and the Prince Carlo Immanuele implore him to stay at their court. His unlucky steps took him back to Ferrara for the third time. He arrived there in February 1579, just before the entry of the duke's third bride.

He presented himself at the threshold of the palace. The duke, intent on the wedding preparations, would not receive him; the princesses were not allowed to do so; the courtiers jeered at him. Tasso's bruised and wounded spirit could endure no more insults. He broke out into fierce invectives against the duke and the whole house of Este, retracted his praises, cursed his past life, abused the vile race of courtiers. Alas! there were too many evil tongues ready to carry these reproaches to the ear of the duke, and Tasso was shut up as insane in the hospital of Sant Anna in Ferrara.

It is not the intention of this essay to dwell on the piteous spectacle presented by Tasso in the asylum of Sant Anna, nor to recall the painful circumstances connected with it—details of physical and mental anguish so terrible that the pen of his contemporary historians refused to fill them in, and left the passages blank. Moreover, a subject so pathetic has naturally furnished

a theme for great writers in poetry and prose.

Byron caused himself to be locked for an hour in the poet's cell, whose narrow limits contained

"Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier,"

before he wrote the poem which records his sufferings.¹

Shelley brought away with him a piece of the very door "which, for seven years and three months, divided this glorious being from the air and the light which had nourished in him those influences which he has communicated through his poetry to thousands." Montaigne visited him, and writes compassionately of his "*piteux estat*." And two modern poets,² his countrymen, once more relate to free Italian ears the story of a prince's tyranny and a poet's fame.

Whatever may be the surmise as to the motive which prompted the iniquitous conduct of the duke, the real reason has remained wrapped in that impenetrable mystery with which it pleased the Italian princes to shroud their crimes. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that records of similar cruelties stain the history of almost every State and Republic of Italy. The rippling waves of the Venetian lagoon yet hide the witness of many a deed of darkness, and the treacherous instruments still preserved in the arsenal remain as tangible proofs that no law of friendship, chivalry, or honour, was allowed to stand between a tyrant and the object of his revenge.

It suited the purposes of Alfonso that Tasso should be considered a madman, therefore he was imprisoned in the foul precincts of Sant Anna. The biographers of the house of Este use every endeavour to prove that the poet was really out of his senses, in order to excuse the conduct of the duke. Admitting, for the sake of argument, this to be true, would it justify him in condemning the great genius of the age to languish among the

¹ *Lament of Tasso*. Byron's Works, vol. iii. p. 113.

² Riccardo Ceroni, and Alceardo Alceardi.

common herd of lunatics, stunned by their perpetual meaningless clamour, shocked by the sight of their sufferings, placed, in short, in circumstances revolting to every one of his refined and delicate senses? Had his affliction been of the nature which the duke pretended it to be, he should have been treated with every mark of consideration and respect, and not exposed to treatment which, far from curing it, was calculated to aggravate it in the highest degree. But such was not the case. Indeed, the perfect sanity of the poet's mind only added to the horror of his situation, enabling him to sound with fearful accuracy the depths of the abyss into which he had fallen. What higher proof of his sanity could be urged than that it withstood shocks sufficient to shake the reason of most men from its seat.

Let any one read his *Dialoghi*¹—treatises composed during his imprisonment—models of calm, dispassionate reasoning, or his poetry, full of the deepest and tenderest pathos, and then judge if Tasso's reason was not entirely within his control. Would they not rather wonder, that, in spite of the fearful circumstances in which he found himself, he was able to retain a poet's keen imagination, a philosopher's serenity of thought?

The original of one of his treatises ("Il Malpiglio Secondo") written throughout in his own hand, is still to be seen in the British Museum,² and as we reverently turn its yellow parchment pages, what a train of compassionate recollections do they awake! Copies can also be seen in the same place of his letters to the Duke of Urbino, imploring him to procure his release from captivity.

But we must pass over the recital of his numerous entreaties, addressed either directly or indirectly to his inexorable tyrant; the palpable contradiction pre-

sented by his being called upon to write from a lunatic asylum the defence of his poem against the attacks of the Accademia della Crusca—"a handful," says Monti, of "insolent sophists, who, like a pack of yelping curs round a sick lion, have made it their business to insult the great genius of the age;"³ and the alternations of hope and fear which must have often made his heart sick, to notice the effect produced by his sufferings upon his character.

Despite the cruel nature of his imprisonment, no abuse of his tormentor ever passed his lips, nor did he ever turn against him the weapon he had once used in his cause; for it should always be remembered that the words "Tu Magnanimo Alfonso," still stand un-erased from the first page of the "*Gerusalemme Liberata*."

No dark thought of putting an end to his almost unendurable misery by suicide seems ever to have presented itself to his mind. The following passage in the "*Torrismondo*," gives us a clue to his thoughts on this awful subject. In it he blames him who—

"Against himself
Would arm his impious and reckless hand,
Scare from its sacred tenement the soul
Which o'er the body keeps a holy ward,
Placed there by God, yielding alone to Him
The trust He gave. Who, when the task
is o'er,
Will call it back to heaven whence it
came."⁴

He held fast to those earnest religious convictions which had early sunk deep into his mind, and now in the midst of the wreck of his hopes he fixed his thoughts steadfastly upon God, "Who," he says, in one of his letters, written from Sant Anna, "never abandons those that firmly believe in Him." And nothing ever shook this trust, not even when in the lonely hours of the night, worn

¹ Maffei, *Storia della Lett. Ital.* vol. i. p. 31.

² *Torrismondo*, act I. scene 2.—So Spenser (who died one year after Tasso) writes:

"The term of life is limited,
Ne may a man prolong nor shorten it;
The souldier may not move from watchful sted,
Nor leave his stand until his Captain bed."

Faery Queene, Book I. c. ix.

¹ 1. Il *Messaggiero*. 2. Il *Gonzaga*. 3. Il *Padro di Famiglia*. 4. Il *Malpiglio Secondo*, etc., vols. vii. viii. *Opere del Tasso*.

² Manuscripts. Additions to the department of MSS. in the British Museum, 1841—1845, folio 12,045, p. 29.

with illness, and unable to rest, his fevered fancy would people his cell with strange forms and phantoms tempting him to despair.

But the years of patient endurance were not to remain unrewarded; the pale, haggard face was not always to gaze piteously through the iron bars of his prison, for the long-desired release came at last. We must again have recourse to surmise to account for the motive which suddenly induced Alfonso to set his victim free.

During the confinement of Tasso in the asylum, Leonora d'Este died, in the forty-fifth year of her age. Up to this period Alfonso gave no hope of ever releasing Tasso from imprisonment, but after that time he was gradually brought to relent. First a change of apartment was provided for the unfortunate poet. Later he was allowed to pay a visit to the Duchess Marfisa d'Este, who was so enraptured with his poem that she implored her cousin (Alfonso) as a personal favour to allow her to invite the author to her villa at Maddaler for one day. This was granted, provided that he was conveyed there and back to Sant Anna in a close carriage. After this, by degrees, the rigour of his imprisonment was relaxed; and at length, but not till he was so ill that it was hardly possible for him to recover, in compliance with the supplications of the whole city of Bergamo, the united prayers of Vincenzo Gonzaga, Cesare d'Este and Virginia de' Medici, whose marriage was about to be solemnized, on the 5th of July, 1586, Tasso was set free.

Free once more to breathe the pure air of heaven, to drink in those beauties of nature which he has so eloquently described, to listen to the song of the birds, to enjoy the sweet smell of the flowers and all the summer glory of his enchanting country—to him these must in truth have seemed "an opening paradise."

Before closing this painful chapter of his life, we must call attention to one of the worst traits in Alfonso's character—his refusal to allow Tasso to kiss his

hand before leaving Ferrara—a last favour which, in token of his free forgiveness, the injured poet asked of his former patron.

Tasso lived nine years after his release from captivity. At first he was courteously entertained in the palace of the Duke of Mantua, the father of his deliverer, Vincenzo Gonzaga. "I am in Mantua," he writes to his friend Licino, "the guest of his excellency the duke. I have been allowed to choose my own attendants out of his household. I am treated with deference and courtesy. I have good food, delicious fruit, excellent bread, and choice wines like those my father used to delight in."¹

This state of ease and tranquillity was unhappily of short duration. Duke Guglielmo of Mantua died. Vincenzo, his son, was too much taken up with the cares of his new dignity to bestow much thought or care upon Tasso, who again set out on his wanderings. The poverty and misfortune which had clung to him all his life still attended him; and it is sad to see him roaming restlessly from city to city, from place to place—he, the author of the great poem of the age, forced to implore the loan of ten scudi to pay his expenses to Rome.

At first also he was tormented by fears lest Alfonso should even now drag him back to the cell whence he had escaped with such difficulty. A modern poet² describes his situation in very pathetic language, which can hardly be done justice to in a translation :—

"O'er fields and plains he roams,
Pale, soiled, a mendicant from door to door,
His mind distraught with anguish. Can this
be
The gentle poet-knight? Ever behind,
Nearer and nearer still, there seems to come
Fast in pursuit the gallop of a horse;
Perchance some officer to drag him back
To foul Sant Anna's narrow prison walls!
Were there in truth around forms with weird
hands
Outstretched to snatch from him his cherished
lays,
The polished work, the ceaseless toil of years,

¹ Manso, *Vita de Tasso*, p. 187.

² Alcardo Alcardi, p. 113.

And cast them to the winds? Strewing the sheets

Along the way-worn track, or on the banks
Which line the desert way! He almost doubts
In sheer perplexity his very self.

Was his poetic genius but a dream,
A futile fancy his immortal work?
Tancred, Clorinda, all the noble forms
And bright creations of his poet's muse,
But vain imaginations?"

Half tempted by the offer of the Ethical and Poetical Chair of the Academy "Degli Addornamenti," at Genoa, he felt obliged to decline it because of the impaired powers of his memory; and once again he returned to Mantua, to dedicate his recently-finished tragedy of "Torrismondo" to the new duke. A long course of insult and injury had rendered the unhappy poet sensitive to an almost morbid degree. Dissatisfied with his reception, fancying that his new dignity had changed the countenance of his former friend towards him, he left Mantua for Rome, with the especial intention of making a pilgrimage to Loreto. Footsore, poverty-stricken, and well-nigh exhausted, he accomplished his vow, and then pushed on towards Rome. But fresh disappointment awaited him there. He had neither strength nor spirit left to struggle and strive among the crowd of place-seekers in the court of the Papal palace to obtain the reward which ought freely to have been bestowed upon the greatest poet of the day.

Again he turned away and fled to Naples, cherishing, as a last hope, the thought of recovering his forfeited paternal inheritance. In this, as in every other matter connected with worldly prosperity, he was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, in that peaceful and beautiful sojourn his mind was able to rest content. The soft, delicious climate was like balm to his shattered health; his eye rested with pleasure upon the bay which has no rival in Europe, the deep blue of the glorious sea, the stately buildings, the fresh fountains, the abundance of fruits and the ever-blowing flowers; and his interest was daily awakened by the scene

of animation before him in the concourse of strangers from all parts of the world, the splendour of their equipages, and all the gay throng of chivalry which had had such charms for him in former days.

In order to escape from the courteous invitations which were showered upon him, he retired for a short time to the quiet monastery of Monte Oliveto. Many went thither to pay their respects to him; among others, Manso, Marchese della Villa, his great friend, and the writer of the biography often quoted in this paper. We next hear of Tasso paying a visit to Bisaccio, the villa of the Marchese; and we read with pleasure the report of Manso, that "Il Tasso is now become so keen a huntsman, that he despises all inclemencies of weather. In the evening we spend many pleasant hours listening to music and singing. He especially delights in the *improvisatori*, admiring their readiness in versification, in which he always considered himself to be deficient."¹

But again his love of wandering carried him back to Rome, to be again received with coldness by his former friend, Scipio Gonzaga, and to throw himself once more upon the hospitality of the monks of Monte Oliveto, whence also he fled away, and was afterwards discovered in circumstances of the greatest poverty in the hospital of the Bergamaschi. However, his troubled life was not destined to endure much longer

"The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

He had patiently borne each and all of the

"whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes."

But a tardy justice was at last to be paid to his genius; and like a flame flashing for a brief instant before it expires was the earthly glory of

¹ Maffei, *Storia della Lett. Ital.* vol. i. p. 316.

the unfortunate Tasso. The Duke of Mantua pressed him to return to his court. The Grand Duke of Tuscany invited him to Florence, and there all the academies and the literary world, with the exception of the envious Crusicans, poured out to welcome him and do him honour. In Rome, through the good offices of Cinzio Aldobrandini, the nephew of Pope Clement VIII., he was given an apartment in the Vatican, with an annual income of 200 scudi. Here he completed the "*Gerusalemme Conquistata*," an unfortunate result produced by the harsh criticisms showered upon the "*Gerusalemme Liberata*." Lastly, the wreath of poet's laurel which had crowned Petrarch was now destined to adorn Tasso's head.

It is a fact worthy of note that in both cases this distinction was obtained by an inferior production of either poet: the "*Scipio Africanus*" of Petrarch, and the "*Gerusalemme Conquistata*" of Tasso. And this coveted honour, which Tasso had deservedly won in the first flower of his youth, now came too late. The ceremony was delayed that it might be performed with more solemnity; and his health, long undermined by disease, hardships, and sorrow, at length gave way. His wanderings were over for ever when his weary steps halted at last at the threshold of the quiet monastery of San Onofrio, on the summit of the Janiculum. "I come," he said to the monks, who received him with pitying glances, "to die among you." Here he spent the last weeks of his life sitting under the shade of the oak, whose boughs stretched out over the garden, looking on the beautiful prospect before him of the ancient capital of the world. Surely those mighty ruins, on whose dim outlines his thoughtful gaze loved to rest, must have added one more example to the long, stern lesson of his life as to the vanity of human greatness, the futility of earthly desires.

But further teaching was scarcely needed now. His spirit, long ago chastened by suffering, and firmly fixed on another and brighter world, was only

waiting the last summons to flee away and be at rest. It was not long delayed. On the 10th of April, 1595, he was told by the papal physician, sent on purpose to attend him, that there was but little hope of his recovery, and from that day till the 25th, when he died, he turned his thoughts heavenward.

There is a touching simplicity in the contemporary narrative of the last days of his life. "Father," he said to his confessor, who was attending him, "write, that I give my spirit back to God who gave it, my body to the earth whence it was taken, to be laid in this church of San Onofrio. My goods I leave to the Lord Cardinal Cinzio, and I pray him to restore to Il Signor Giambattista Manso the little portrait of me painted by his wish, and only lent to me for life. To this monastery I bequeath this Sacred Image of our dear Lord,"—and, as he spoke, he clasped the crucifix of singularly beautiful workmanship which hung beside his bed. A few days afterwards he received the last sacraments of the Church, and died peacefully with the unfinished ejaculation on his lips, "Into Thy hands, O Lord, —."

That same evening his body, according to his wish, found a last resting-place in the church of San Onofrio.

The simple inscription, "*Hic jacet Torquatus Tassus*," graven in the stone, still marks the place of his repose,—

"And nought remains to mark thy last abode
But the bright waters of a sparkling well,
A simple stone, and the eternal smile
Of the Campagna. Suffer us once more
To wake thy golden lyre, that we may touch
With trembling hand the chord which tells
thy fame."¹

When we remember that the pen of Tasso never rested from the time when, at seventeen, it produced the "*Rinaldo*" up to the very last days of his life, and that he died in his fifty-first year, we cannot wonder that twenty-five volumes remain to us of his writings. It would not only be presumptuous, but impossible, to attempt to do more than give a passing notice of them in these pages.

¹ Aleardo Aleardi, p. 115.

His prose compositions may be divided into "Dialoghi," "Discorsi," and "Lettere." His "Discorsi," Ginguéné¹ tells us, especially the one which relates to heroic poetry, prove how much he had meditated on the poetics of Aristotle; the "Dialoghi" how deeply he had studied Plato. Any one of these Dialoghi, the "Messaggiero," for instance, is well worth reading as a sample of the clear reasoning and pellucid style which characterizes his prose as well as his poetic writings. Of these last the "Rinaldo" and "Aminta" have already been mentioned; of the "Torrismondo," begun before and finished after his imprisonment, Tasso himself had not a high opinion. The dialogue is reckoned dull and heavy, but the "cori," like those in the "Aminta," are full of fire and spirit, and the concluding one pictures forth his recent sufferings with great pathos. The whole manuscript, in his own handwriting and the original vellum binding, has been recently added to the collection in the British Museum.²

The poem on the Creation ("Il Mondo Creato") was the last work of Tasso's life, but only the two first books were ever finished, the five last being merely sketched out. In the completed portions there are some fine passages—the creation of light on the first day,³ that of the firmament on the second day, and a remarkable protest against the presumptuous folly of astrologers and stargazers. Milton is supposed to have borrowed many of his ideas for "Paradise Lost" from this poem.

But all these minor works sink into comparative insignificance beside the great production of his genius, the "Gerusalemme Liberata," and here again the discussions and controversies

which occupied for years the attention of the literary Italian world can scarcely be reduced into a few paragraphs.

It is necessary, however, to point out as briefly as possible the cause which first raised the storm of criticism.

When the "Gerusalemme" first appeared, the poem of Ariosto was at the zenith of its fame, and it was imitated with servility by all the inferior poets. But the genius of Tasso early taught him, that, if he was to rival Ariosto, it could not be by following in his steps, that he could not surpass the "Orlando Furioso" as an achievement of romantic poetry. An epic poem, however, like those of Homer and Virgil, had as yet been untried by an Italian poet, and this was the path which Tasso resolved to follow in pursuit of fame. This appears in his reply to the letter full of eulogy addressed to him by Orazio Ariosto, the nephew of Ariosto: "The crown you would honour me with," writes Tasso, "already adorns the head of the poet to whom you are related, from whence it would be as easy to snatch it as to wrest the club from the hand of Hercules. I would no more receive it from your hand than I would snatch it myself. I honour him (Ariosto); I pay him every mark of respect. I publicly declare him to be my father in the art of poetry, my master, my prince," etc.

But despite these protestations, despite the pains Tasso had taken to follow a completely different route from Ariosto, his enemies would insist upon accusing Tasso of the presumption of contending with Ariosto; and the ill-advised, but well-meant treatise of Camillo Pellegrino⁴ only confirmed them in this idea.

We will not attempt to deal with the pedantic criticisms and wholesale vituperations by which the recently founded "Accademia della Crusca"⁵ hoped to attain an early celebrity. To these Tasso replied with calm dignity,

"With a glory round his furrow'd brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Crusean quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow

¹ Vol. v. p. 30.

² Catalogue of Additional Manuscripts, 1860. Add. 23778. This autograph manuscript of Tasso, filled with numerous alterations and corrections, was given by Licino (the friend who announced to Tasso his release from Sant Anna) to Abbioso the poet (1588); it subsequently fell into the hands of the Minorite Ottaviano Cameriani of Ravenna, and was presented by him to Cardinal Cybo (1650), whose arms it still bears on the cover.

³ *Mondo Creato*, p. 19.

⁴ *Opere di Tasso*, vol. xviii. 20.

⁵ 1583.

No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire."¹

It is a more pleasing task to quote the opinion of Metastasio. "If Apollo," he says, "were to take a fancy to endow me with a great poetical genius, and commanded me to declare which of these great poems ('Orlando Furioso' and 'Gerusalemme Liberata') I should wish the production of my genius to resemble, I should certainly make my choice with great hesitation, but I think my natural inclination to order, exactitude, and method would decide me in favour of the 'Gerusalemme.'" "Thus he writes," says Tiraboschi, whose comment on this opinion is still more interesting, "with the modesty of a really great man; but I should reply with more courage to Apollo, and my answer would be different. Were he to ask me to write an epic poem, I should beg him to make me resemble Tasso; were I to undertake a romantic poem, I should desire to imitate Ariosto; but if I were to choose which of these poets I should most wish to resemble in their natural gift for poetry, I should first of all beg Tasso's pardon, but I should pray Apollo to bestow on me the natural gift of Ariosto."²

It is certainly a truth not to be denied, that Tasso was apt to overlay with too refined and artificial ornament scenes of natural pathos which would have been more vigorously painted by the bolder hand of Ariosto. But this trivial failing does not justify the harsh opinion expressed in the spiteful lines of Boileau:—

"Tous les jours à la cour un sot de qualité
Peut juger de travers avec impunité,
A Malherbe, à Racan, préférer Théophile,
Et le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile."

which, eagerly caught up and repeated, have done more than any other criticism to damage Tasso's reputation as a poet. Ginguène tries to explain away the lines. Boileau, he says, never meant

to imply that because Tasso's poetry contained some alloy it was not also full of precious metal. He only blamed those who prefer the artificial portions of "Gerusalemme" to all the solid gold of Virgil, and, afterwards, in another passage of his "Art Poétique," the French satirist considerably modified his opinion of Tasso. It may be doubted, by the way, whether he was aware that Tasso's happiest imitation, the famous verse on the sick child, was taken from Lucretius. Unhappily Boileau's partial recantation is forgotten, while the former lines are remembered; and it is difficult not to think, with Byron, that these were inspired by an envious motive.

Let us now turn from refuting the criticisms of the "Gerusalemme Liberata," to point out some of the great intrinsic merits of the poem. In the choice of his subject Tasso was especially fortunate. At all times calculated to enlist the earnest sympathy of the Christian reader the circumstances of the age give it a still more marked and definite interest. The peaceful condition of Europe had left the Christian states free to turn their arms against the Turks, and it seemed hardly probable that they would shortly be compelled to surrender their "grande ingiusta preda,"³ for just at the moment when Tasso, in his twenty-seventh year, was still engaged on his poem, the Christian forces had won the famous victory of Lepanto (1571). This war against the Turks naturally diverted the stream of European thought back into the old channel of the Crusades, and many warriors entertained the hope that another crusade would shortly be organized.

The oration pronounced in honour of Tasso before the Academy at Ferrara, the year after his death (1596), concludes with a passionate entreaty to all the princes of Europe to avenge the depredations of the Turks, and not to cease from warfare till, like new God-freys, they had hung up their victorious arms as trophies before the Holy Sepulchre.

In the military plan and operations of

¹ *Childe Harold*, canto IV. xxxviii.

² Tir. vii. 1267, 1268.

³ *Gerusalemme Liberata*, c. i. 5.

his poem, Tasso is considered unrivalled by any other poet, and this success is considered, in some measure, to be due to the instructions of Alfonso. During the happier days of his court favour at Ferrara, Tasso would consult the duke, who piqued himself on his generalship, as to the march of the troops, their plan of attack, the positions of vantage, the method of conducting the siege, and all the military features of the enterprise.

Again, Godfrey de Bouillon is a model general, while he is also an example of calm, faultless virtue. The other knights, Tancred and Rinaldo, despite their courage and chivalry, are not so attractive as heroes as the bright, captivating Clorinda, or the modest, gentle Erminia as heroines. Each of the detached episodes in which they appear is in itself a perfect picture, while they do not hinder the unity of purpose which gives such a distinct coherence to the action of the poem, causing it to march in an undeviating course to its conclusion.

These are some of the main features of the "Gerusalemme," but every Italian scholar will rather turn to the poem itself, and recall some of the favourite passages which it contains—the grand opening stanzas, the soul-stirring description of the Crusaders' first sight of Jerusalem, the pathetic beauty of Dudone's death, the flight of Erminia, Tancred and Clorinda, their battle and her death, which can hardly be read with dry eyes. In the description of nature, Tasso is peculiarly happy, whether he describes the gradual coming on of night with her "stellato velo" (vi. 103), or the sea with her "cerulei campi spumanti" (xvi. 4), or the cool waters of a spring which "mormorando sen va gelida e bruna" (xv. 56), or when he seizes upon the slightest circumstance, such as the varied hue of the feathers,

"Che di gentile
Amorosa colomba il collo cinge" (xv. 6),

and interweaves it as a bright ornament in his chain of description, or, as a last example, when he rises to the sublime

in his account of the ruins of Carthage (xv. 20).

It was, in truth, no wonder that the polished stanzas found a responsive chord in every Italian heart from the first moment of their publication. The princes caused them to be read aloud in their courts, the priests murmured them in the shade of the cloister, the people loved them, the gondolier would recite them in soft melancholy cadence as he steered himself through the water-streets of Venice or launched out towards the Lido, the brigand of the Abruzzi, with their sound still in his ears, would not hurt a hair of the poet's head when he journeyed alone and unfriended towards Rome; even the galley-slaves of Livorno, as, chained together, they dragged their weary steps along the shore, would chant fragments of the Crusader's Litanies in the "Gerusalemme Liberata."

In the space of six months after its first publication it was reprinted seven times—six times in Italy and once in France,¹ and two thousand copies of Ingegneri's edition were sold in two days.

As the "Rinaldo" marked the dawn of Tasso's poetical genius, and the "Gerusalemme Liberata" its meridian splendour, so the "Gerusalemme Conquistata" may be considered as its sunset. The expiring rays still shine on such passages as the "Dream of Godfrey" (c.x.), or the attack on Jerusalem; but whereas the "Gerusalemme Liberata" will be considered one of the classics of Italy so long as her language remains, the "Conquistata," pared and tamed down in deference to the opinion of his merciless critics, and filled with elaborate allegories, is scarcely if at all read, and then only to compare with its predecessor, and lament over the omission of the finest passages of the first poem.

Space forbids the mention of his numerous Canzone and Madrigali in every varied form of poetical beauty; but however brief and imperfect this notice may have been, enough has perhaps been said to prove that his works were indeed

¹ Milman's *Life of Tasso*, vol. ii. p. 29.

the faithful mirror of his mind and character.

In his philosophical essays—and it should be remembered in what fearful circumstances many of these were written—we notice a calm, patient reasoning, a well-balanced order of thought, unmoved by passion, unshaken by misfortune. Nor can we render full justice to this gravity and sobriety of mind till we have learnt from his enthusiastic poetry that, far from being cold and reserved, his nature was sensitive and passionate in the highest degree, his tender love of everything that was beautiful or noble speaking in every line of every poem, and awakening a kindred feeling in the heart of his reader.

Of gentle birth, he was also a gentleman in the truest sense of the word. Courage, chivalry, loyalty, were among the brightest ornaments of his character, and to these may be added that essentially Christian virtue, forgiveness of injuries. How perfectly he fulfilled this last duty let each who reads his life judge for himself.

Lastly, the "*Gerusalemme Liberata*" gives us the true clue to that deep piety which sustained him throughout his

troubled storm-tossed life, and guided him safely into the haven of peace and rest. It is true that the earthly crown of glory slipped from his dying grasp, but we cannot grieve on this account when we remember the words which he puts in the mouth of his favourite hero, and which are now so applicable to himself—

"Già non si deve a te doglia nè pianto;
Chè, se morì nel mondo, in ciel rinasci;
E qui, dove ti spogli il mortal manto,
Di gloria impresse alte vestigia lasci.
Vivesti qual guerrier cristiano e santo,
E come tal sei morto: or godi, e pasci
In Dio gli occhi bramosi, o felice alma,
Ed hai del ben oprar corona e palma."

Gerusalemme Liberata, canto iii. 68.

"We need not mourn for thee, here laid to rest;
Earth is thy bed, and not thy grave; the skies
Are for thy soul the cradle and the nest;
There live, for here thy glory never dies;
For like a Christian knight and champion blest,
Thou didst both live and die; now feed thine eyes
With thy Redeemer's sight, where, crown'd with bliss,
Thy faith, zeal, merit, well-deserving is."

Fairfax's Translation.

CATHERINE MARY PHILLIMORE.

THE AMERICAN HEROINE.

OF all the curiosities given to the world by America, the national heroine of romance is, to our mind, one of the most singular and interesting. She speaks for more than herself; she throws a light on American social institutions and ideas, such as not even the travelling notes of observant and philosophical members of parliament give us; and through her we are constantly getting deeper insight into the working of the wonderful social and political fabric that those energetic and fearless descendants of ours are building out of old-English manners. If we examine the American heroine as she appears in the pages of the earlier novelists, and compare her with those of to-day, we find that she has undergone a gradual development and change from the flashing-eyed squaw of Mr. Fennimore Cooper's tales up to the completed type in the hands of Mrs. Stowe, the younger Hawthorne, or Miss Alcott. She has grown with the growth of her country, and strengthened with its strength, until now she appears before us in full bloom, as one of the most striking of national phenomena. We have her treated by master hands. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes makes Elsie Venner into a philosophical study; he puts her through a process of accurate and careful analysis, favouring his readers with all the results, and giving us not only the colour of her hair and eyes, but also the component parts of her blood. Mr. Julian Hawthorne, following in the same path, subjects his characters to a scrutiny which, though there is little trace in it of what the great master calls "the modesty of nature," may be supposed to give us facts—facts which, however disagreeable, are, it is supposed, only supplied by such like vivisection. In the elder

Hawthorne, on the other hand, we have the heroine spiritualised and supernaturalised into an etherealness of texture only equalled hitherto by Richter.

We can, too, see our heroine under various shades of attendant incident, from Indian adventure, to life in social communities, or in the Fifth Avenue hotel; but in all circumstances and in all hands she carries with her an unmistakable nationality; whether she is described well or ill, whether she is treated of philosophically, religiously, or sentimentally, the heroine of American tales is a new being, and must be accepted as a new type of woman. Mr. Darwin must account for her as he can. She is no daughter of the old-fashioned Eve. Freitag's Lina speaks German, Victor Hugo's Minette has French manners; but they are still of the old type—we still recognize them as belonging to the race. But this American girl is an essentially new creation. It is not that she does not speak our tongue, that she is not graced with feminine attributes, that she is not gifted with beauty, golden hair, small feet and a bewitching smile, attributes which are happily common to heroines of all countries; but as one reads of her sayings and doings, we feel that this creature is no longer of us. She is not bone of our bone; she has passed from among us; she has emigrated to new spheres; and we examine her with wonder and admiration mixed with some little amusement. She is possibly the representative of a future era in fiction, and we are perhaps destined to see the day when we shall meet her in the pages of English novels. She must therefore be an instructive study.

Where can we find her best? In the elder Hawthorne we are cut off from

noticing some of his finest figures—notably, Hester Prynne and Hepzibah of the *House of the Seven Gables*, as they belong to a period so early in American history as to place them perhaps more in the midst of American than English ideas and associations. Priscilla and Hilda of the *Blithedale Romance* and *Transformation*, belong to New England of to-day. In them, Desdemona-like in their pensive delicacy, the purity and sweetness of the Roman lady is scarcely lessened under the discipline of Puritan manners; her grace and beauty scarcely dimmed as the silk and jewels are changed for the Puritan cap and kerchief. About these exquisite forms, Hawthorne has, however, thrown his visionary atmosphere, under which they seem to contract and expand, ghostlike, into greater or less clearness, an atmosphere which carries them out of the range of criticism. Priscilla's hand melts in ours as we try to draw her nearer for inspection; and Hilda and her doves dissolve into a Fra Angelico's Madonna, which in the whimsicalness of a dream we seem to have conjured into the form of a New England girl. On the other hand, Mr. Bret Harte objects so thoroughly to any respectable people, either men or women, that we may be pardoned if we do not choose a heroine from his pages at all for our special examination. His notion that the heroic virtues are chiefly to be found in the very worst company—the whitest lilies only blooming in the darkest and dirtiest of pools—is possibly correct. But we still hope that it is scarcely just to his countrywomen to take Miggles or M'liss as flowers of the purest national growth; and while by no means denying the power of his sketches, we think it will be fairer to take Mrs. Stowe's or Miss Alcott's young ladies as being more genuine pictures of the American heroine.

About Miss Alcott's Joes and Dolly Wards there is certainly no vagueness, no philosophising. We have in the "Old-fashioned Girl" and "Little Women"

the American girl of ordinary life at her best, and very pleasingly portrayed. Miss Alcott has the advantage of not having any physiological theories to discuss or psychological difficulties to solve, and she is quite content to lay before us clear unambitious sketches—giving us, with homely truthfulness and vivacity in fiction, what Mr. Eastburn Johnstone does in painting. Her characters are not heroic, but, unlike those of some other American novelists, they do not smack of the laboratory, the necromancer's study, or the dissecting-room. Her "girl" steps on the stage and begins her career amazingly early of course. One of her "little women" is a fascinating person before she is fifteen. She has begun life, wears long dresses, looks after the morals of her boy acquaintances, and takes a foremost place in the drama of life, when her European contemporary is leading a humdrum life in the schoolroom, and knows herself to be a person of no moment to any one beyond her parents and governess.

But it is not as a child that the American young lady almost before her teens is interesting, not as a mere passive recipient of impressions, but as an active and influential personage, that her sayings and doings are recorded. Life has begun for her. She has her part to play, her responsibility to meet, and her opinions to enunciate. She has already entered and is an actor on that world of emotion and excitement which begins some five or six years later with us: the world of romance that opens somewhere between childhood and the time when the serious work of life begins. This period of first youth—when the consciousness of individuality dawns, and the subtle influences of other people on ourselves and of ourselves on other people become apparent, and when, through friction with others, comes the knowledge of good and evil, both within and without—is the time chosen by all novelists and storytellers as giving them the openest field and the fullest materials wherewith to work.

It is the time when the elements of character are fused, and are at their highest heat. The mind of childhood is like the gold in the crucible, unsullied but formless. The forces of life, like fire, are at work upon it, but we can scarcely do more than guess what its secret workings may be. When maturity is reached the time of change is over; the gold in its solid and firm shape goes forth to its passage in the world, and there is no further change for it but that of wear and decay. But around the moment of transition—around that brief bright period of youth when the doors of life seem to open and the pure and splendid metal is poured forth to meet the world—to take we know not what form, to receive we know not what stamp—around this time there hangs a charm, just because it is so momentous and so brief. Youth is the time of bursting blossom and springing power. Love throws its light over it, and above it hangs the wavering shadow of uncertainty; for who shall say which way the new life will turn?

And into this flowery Eden, with its glory and beauty, its tempting Satan and its forbidden fruit, American writers agree to place their Eve almost in the years of childhood. English novels have children in them no doubt. Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, Mrs. Gaskell, have given us the childish experiences of their heroines; but it is as children and as children only that these young heroines are interesting. Their place is entirely understood. Their *raison d'être* is as charming creatures who are being moulded into shape, and under harsh or kindly treatment made into members of society. The first two or three chapters of an English novel may well be given, we think, to school and nursery days, if only to explain to us what the future Jane Eyre, Hester, or Maggie Tulliver is to be. The child here is understood to be merely mother to the woman, and it is only as a transitional being that she is brought before our notice.

But American novelists take an entirely different view. These "girls" of

theirs—for the word has received a new meaning, and is a specific rather than a generic term—are interesting as active members of society. They do not strike us, as they have been sometimes described, as impudent, and usurpations of fictitious rights, and we entirely protest against that view being taken of their frankness and vivacity. We heartily enjoy their talk, their half wise, half foolish, wholly genuine reflections. They are exquisitely and *unconsciously* truthful. There is no effort about their honesty, it is as unaffected as their phraseology, with its "guesses" and abbreviations. They are audacious, but they are full of tact. The little girl standing on a door-step vainly endeavouring to reach the bell-handle was no exceptional child. When an old gentleman—a minister among the Quakers—approached and mounted the steps to her relief, she turned, and at once acknowledged his kindness by saying, with gravity and perfect readiness, "I am obliged to thee, friend Jones; I have frequently heard thee preach with pleasure." This was not impudence. The young Philadelphian showed, we think, not only a Bayard-like lack of fear, but a Bayard-like sense of courtesy in thus attempting to enter into the feelings of her aged friend and praising his "ministry." Such a child as this does not belong to the insensate condition of the *enfant terrible*; she is a civilized being among civilized beings, and is *en rapport* with mankind.

Miss Alcott's heroines are all of this kind—they are full of tact, readiness, and amiable audacity. Their self-assertion is not of the rebellious order, for their position is perfectly acknowledged. They seem very kind to their parents, though their relations with father and mother perhaps partake rather of good fellowship than reverence. We hear of no family dissensions; fathers and their sons, mothers and their daughters, pull very evenly together, though one cannot deny that the daughters frequently row "stroke" in the family boat. There is a hearty and confidential feeling between

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Mrs. March and her daughters. "Send me as much advice as you like," writes Miss Amy to her mamma; "and I will take it," she frankly adds, "*if I can.*"

The "violet-like" bashfulness that hangs almost like a perfume upon the presence of Mrs. Gaskell's Mollies and Ruths these New England heroines have not; but they are wholesomely truthful, very sprightly, charmingly at their ease. They know how to be generous, but for any of that amiable hypocrisy with which Thackeray was so fond of charging his countrywomen, we look in vain. The most amiable and docile of the "March girls" has no more of this weakness than an English schoolboy, and withal they have none of the ugliness of self-consciousness and *mauvaise honte*; and if to our ears some of their phraseology is a little awkward, we must acknowledge that they themselves are not *gauche*. Their position is assured, and they make no painful efforts to please. Like the great Metternich, their manners are the same to prince or peasant. "They say I am not to speak to you unless you speak to me; is that so?" said the American belle when presented to the Prince Regent, finding that he was slow in beginning the conversation. And this is precisely the remark that Mrs. Stowe's Sally Ketteridge, or Miss Alcott's Jo or Amy March would have made, adding, had they seen good to do so, any advice on his public or private duties to his plethoric Royal Highness that might have occurred to them.

The only instance of an anxiety to please in an American girl that we recall is in the case of Mr. Anthony Trollope's Ophelia Gledd. Mr. Trollope has, as we know, been everywhere, and doubtless draws Miss Pheely from life; but we are surprised to find the cool, audacious Boston belle, who patronises everybody, show actual timidity when she has accepted an English lover, at the thought of meeting the "she baronet" among his relations. We should have been quite prepared to find Mr. Trollope express anxiety as to her

reception in London, but certainly none on the part of Miss Pheely herself.

In fact, it seems, judging by what we find in most American novels, to be an acknowledged truth in America, that the young ladies are the best and most agreeable exponents of the virtues, and best guides to old and young; so that a sprightly heroine has, we find, much to do in the way of giving advice, and has opinions of her own about everything, which she is consistent in carrying into action, and about which she speaks freely. "I never dance with Tom," says one; "he is a non-union man." One says the Empress of the French dresses in bad taste, or the English cathedral service is formal; another reads her male friends lectures on the evils of smoking and taking too many glasses of sherry. Any of Miss Alcott's sisterhood would have said what we once heard a pretty Abolitionist say to a devoted Baltemorian who stood holding her fan, gloves, and bouquet at a ball. He had tested her principles somewhat roughly by saying, "But I suppose you would scarcely be ready to marry a black man, Miss —?" "As lief as one who would ask me the question," she answered, between the spoonfuls of ice she was eating.

In English tales the good advice and moral sentiments are left to the rector of the parish, or the earnest member of parliament; or perhaps they are modestly given from the mouth of the author himself in the pauses of more exciting conversation; but all these good things are served up to us by the heroine herself in American tales. No doubt the author shows much shrewdness in making all the moralities proceed from the charming person with whom everybody is expected to fall in love; but while holding the very apparent truth that virtues unexplained have a much higher charm, we must admit that the sort of talk which abounds in American novels to which we refer is much better than the sentimental inanities or sensationally horrible posi-

tions to which English heroines in all but novels of the higher class are condemned. American novelists have less incident at their disposal, and are forced to become more analytical and deductive.

And here we come to the explanation of one of the peculiarities of the American heroine. The security of her position and the conditions of society in which she lives are not romantic. Her very independence and freedom of action cut her off from those situations of trial and danger which have served to make the heroines of the Old World; and it is difficult to find for her, unless she has had the advantage—speaking in a literary sense—of being a black or quadroon, any of those misfortunes and trials by which her European contemporary is rendered charming. Where every one has elbow-room and a vote, there are naturally fewer catastrophes, fewer trials for the heroic virtues; and society under these circumstances offers less material for the seeker after romance. It has been said that but for the miseries and misfortunes of mankind there would have been no history; and we may certainly add, that without the griefs and difficulties that fate throws in the way of individual men and women, the novelist would have little to say. The two greatest stories ever told have danger, war, and death as their theme, and the figures of Hector and Helen, Achilles and Penelope, move asserting their life and vigour through a troubled and stormy atmosphere. Tales written about a safer, more comfortable, and more monotonous state of society must naturally trust less to incident, and throw the interest more and more into the analysis of character and emotion. Since the days of Scott and Goldsmith our tales have been growing more introspective; and in America, where the acme of individual well-being and freedom has been reached, it is perhaps not wonderful that the novelist is driven further and further on this course, and that some American writers have pushed on the process of

physiological dissection in a way that renders their work both preposterous and disgusting. But there is happily another class of novelists in America to whom a healthier instinct has forbidden this cause, and for them there is another path open. They candidly take the common incidents of everyday life, steeped in what local atmosphere they can get, and let the characters of their stories develop themselves and talk themselves clear. The pictures of New England life in Mrs. Stowe's *Pearl of Orr's Island*, are vivid and charming; the heroines of Miss Alcott's novels talk extremely well. If they have not the charm which comes from the romantic interest of many misfortunes, they have plenty of opinions on all subjects. If the heroine of an English, French, or German novel usually charms us by reason of her sweetness, fortitude, and gentleness, she herself remaining almost a passive instrument in the hands of Fate, the American heroine, with her graces and powers, is an active agent, and amid circumstances over which—if we except the weather and some of the natural laws—she has always perfect control.

Why should we be surprised by the contrast? The European heroine has close hedging disabilities on all sides, which we have, somehow, come to regard as, if not forming one of her charms, at least tending to develop qualities which are charming. The harsh relatives, the all-powerful parents and guardians, the family feuds, the difficulties about property, the distinctions of class—all these are shades in the picture which serve to throw out the principal figure into fuller light. The dangers that beset her invite the display of manly loyalty and devotion; and if difficulties hedge her path, or chain her, Andromeda-like, to a rock, the charm of her patience and courage are almost sufficient to disarm the malignity of the monster himself; and it is the novelist's duty to see that Perseus arrives in the third volume. The American heroine has to make

her way without any of these attractive but painful disasters. Where property passes readily from hand to hand, and no one is hopelessly cast down at the loss of a fortune, difficulties about property are rare, and family quarrels scarcely known. She has no harsh relatives, and if such a thing as a cruel stepmother were possible in America, it would be absurd to represent Cinderella crying disconsolately over the hearth, when as a matter of fact we know that she might easily pack her trunk and go and "teach school," or "travel west," where half a dozen young emigrants are ready to marry her, or a place in the telegraph-office is awaiting her acceptance. There are, as we know, no wicked earls in America to persecute lovely governesses with their attentions, no dreadful duchesses to interfere with the happiness of young persons, not even a blustering squire to swear at his daughter and hinder her perfectly justifiable union with the excellent young curate. From all these painful but interesting casualties the American heroine is cut off. If Romeo falls in love with Juliet in Boston or New York, stolen interviews and a ladder of ropes would be absurdities, when he has only to call on her and candidly and decorously avow his feelings in her own private "parlour." Juliet under these circumstances is doubtless happier than if she lived in Verona, but as a heroine of romance we must admit she is less interesting. American novelists have to play their game according to their board and with new rules. Their queen piece has perhaps a wider range and more moves, and is in truth as active as bishop or knight, but she no longer seems to hold the place of central interest, and the security of her position is not so momentous to the game.

As the American novelist has not much to offer his heroine in the way of romance in her career, she is somewhat thrown on her own resources, and we must own she supports herself very cleverly. It requires uncommonly good

conversational powers to keep one's self going through three volumes; but some of these young Americans do it well to the last page. Mrs. Stowe's and Miss Alcott's girls are always sprightly; they are, in fact, far cleverer than their male friends. They are neither pert, nor fast, nor unfeminine, but they take the lead. The female voices in the chorus chant the melody, the basses and tenors fill in the parts. Let us give them all due praise. These young women are true-hearted, high-minded, and pure—with a purity which perhaps strikes one as belonging more to dignity and self-respect of character than that which is allied to depth and passion of nature. If they have faults, they are the faults of sensible people. They feel that their tact and truthfulness, their shrewdness and good sense, are a mainstay to society, and society is in their hands. A sentence from one of these New England stories throws a curious light on the changed position given by American novelists to the members of a family:—

"To outsiders, the five energetic women seemed to rule the house, and so they did in many things; but the quiet man sitting among his books was still the head of the family, the household conscience, anchor, and comforter; for to him the busy, anxious women always turned in troublous times, finding him, in the truest sense of those sacred words, husband and father."¹

We have read a description such as this in some English tales, but in this case it was the father and sons who were "busy" and "anxious," and it was the "quiet" mother who was described as the "anchor" and "comforter."

Character is shown and developed under all emotions, but love has its own especially testing powers; and if, as is said, love transforms the heart, it much more reveals it. Under this crucial test of love we may therefore expect to find the deeper parts of our heroine's nature disclosed. But here,

¹ "Little Women Wedded."

as everywhere, she is gracefully self-contained, and is never carried beyond herself and the moment. It would be generally admitted, we imagine, that the interest of a love story, like a well-conceived melody, should flow on, rising higher and fuller as the passion strengthens, the disclosure of the two hearts like the ever-expected but exquisite closing chords of the melody ending the history. The love story in American novels is usually original and charmingly told, but there is something wanting. The air is sprightly and sweet, but the harmony seems to lack force. The love scene is often graceful, natural, and ingenious, but wanting in that ring and depth of tone that stirs the imagination with a sense of wonder and delight, as if the gates of Eden had momentarily opened, and some of the light had fallen upon us as we read. There is less of disclosure, less of contrast, in the two natures that meet; less ecstasy and effulgence in the surprise and joy. In them the pathos is not so striking as the cleverness of the questions and replies.

In the story of *Bressant* there are, we must admit, situations conceived which promise the display of overpowering emotion; but is the promise kept? We think not. Cornelia Valyon is represented as a beautiful woman, carried into treachery and humiliation by a passionate love. There are pages taken up with descriptions of her nature and her feelings; but, after all, physiological scrutiny is not dramatic power, and Mr. Hawthorne's painstaking and unscrupulous inquiries end in making more vague a character that in the first few chapters was vivid and life-like. Possibly the explanation lies in the fact that *reserve*, that subtle element in all passion, is not here, and that the most accurate dissection of emotion is but a confession of impotence to conceive it in living form.

It is not our place here to enter into any discussion of the deeper question underlying the simple one before us. It is with the novelist alone that we

have to do. We would only seek to compare the qualities of what we may roughly take to be the ideal woman of American fiction with those of the heroine of the Old World. That American novelists have discarded the old artistic place of the heroine as the passive, though perhaps central figure, in the drama, and placed her in the rank of active agents in the scene, is plain; that in their view her highest charm is no longer in her "eyes of meek surrender" and "her constraining grace of rest," but rather in her playful and shrewd supremacy over society. If, in their hands, she has lost some of the pensive charm of the Juliets, Desdemonas, and Violets, we must admit that she has gained by freedom the virtue of freedom—truthfulness. If, in the greater ease and security of the society in which she is placed, she seem to have lost somewhat in passion and tenderness, she has at any rate preserved the graces of uprightness and courage in their full beauty. This we must, however, venture to think—in removing her from the old position as the passive centre of the tale, the American novelists have lost for their heroine something of that more subtle and hidden power which the poets and writers of the Old World have ascribed to her. The earliest story of human life has perhaps been the type for others; and the first initial act of Eve, while it for ever laid upon her the doom of a secondary place in the active world, endued her for ever in men's minds as having a subtle and close connection with the invisible powers of good and evil. Dimly or clearly this great instinct has been reflected in all literature; nobly or basely it has found expression in legend, poem, and popular superstition, declaring itself under the shapes of Prophetess, Sibyl, or the vulgarer form of Witch. It finds its last echo perhaps in the position assigned to the heroine in the modern European novel—a position of very limited action, but one of subtle and spiritual influence.

Our own poets all lend their precedents to this idea. Shakespeare asserts it in almost every play, giving the world of action to men, but making the moral catastrophe and interest centre and hang upon the fidelity, love, or virtue of a woman. Spenser taught it not more strongly, but more directly; the active interest of his stories always being in the fights and adventures of the Red Cross Knight, Sir Scudamore, or Prince Arthur; while the hidden and fatal powers are laid in the hands of Britomart, Una, and Duessa. And Milton, with the voice of Adam, even under the rebuke of an Archangel, asserts it again:—

“ For well I understand,

In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures.

Yet
Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenance, and like folly shows;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first not after made,
Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed.”

It seems to lie now with the American writers to show whether this is all a dream and a fallacy.

AGNES MACDONELL.

SNOWDROPS.

O SNOWDROPS, do not rise,
Because the happy eyes
That loved you once, now underneath you lie;
Let not your buds appear,
Each seems a frozen tear,
That never drops, and yet is never dry.

Such useless tears they seem,
As in a heavy dream,
We pour about our griefs to make them grow;
When all the lights are pale,
And all the cruses fail,
And all the flowers are underneath the snow.

M. B. SMEDLEY.

THE "BANIANs."—THE TRADERS OF THE INDIAN SEAS.

I.—THE BHATTIA EPICUREANS.

THERE are few more tempting fields of investigation for the ethnologist, or for the student of moral or political philosophy, than the history and habits of the various trading communities to be found round the shores of the Arabian Sea.

Here, in Europe, a few generations suffice to amalgamate with the older inhabitants of the land the foreign immigrants who come to trade and settle amongst us. But in India, and in all the ports of Indian seas where trade is in the hands of Indian merchants, each class, tribe, or caste of traders remains for ever distinct. As they are now, so apparently they have been for ages; trading together, and sometimes in partnership, but never intermarrying, and rarely consorting much, except on 'change. A century of English rule, the greatest modern solvent of caste distinctions, has done little to fuse together the separate elements of the native Indian commercial community. At any large port like Bombay, Muscat, or Zanzibar, the number and variety of the classes engaged in trade, their sharply distinctive features, costumes, and customs, strike the most superficial observer, whilst those who look deeper find in the bazaars of the port a perfect microcosm of Indo-Arabian and African history and manners.

We will take one important and characteristic division of such a community—the Bhattias—a sect of Hindu Epicureans, amongst whom are to be found the keenest of traders, the most sensual of voluptuaries, intellects remarkable even among Hindus for acuteness and subtlety, sometimes an obtuseness of moral consciousness which would startle a galley slave, but in rare exceptions a simple devotion to truth

which would do honour to a Christian martyr. The Bhattias have their homes in all the great commercial centres of Western India from the north of Rajputana to Bombay; but they may be found sometimes as residents for years together, sometimes only as temporary visitors during the trading season, at almost every port on the western coast of India, on the shores of Arabia, and of Africa, as far south as Mozambique. They may be easily distinguished from other "Banians" by the difference in their dress. If they wear their Indian costume, it is a tight-fitting, long-skirted, white cotton vest, and instead of trousers, they wear a long cotton web formed into a kind of kilt (dhotu) and tucked up so as not to impede the action of the feet in walking. Above all, they may generally be known by a huge coloured cotton turban, usually red, and folded with a curious distinctive peak in front. One or more of these turbans may be seen at the landing-place in most ports between Busora and Mozambique. The wearers are generally men of fair complexion with sharp, aquiline, well-cut features, and keen black eyes. In youth the face is often strikingly beautiful; but, as years roll on, the absorbing attention to mercantile gain gives a haggard and hawk-like expression to the features, though some men of mature and advanced age may be seen with countenances, which, less disguised by their ugly head-dress, would be models to a sculptor or painter. These men generally belong to the "Vallābhāchārya" sect of Hindus, who may be briefly described as a class of Hindu schismatics, exclusively devoted to a body to foreign commerce, and ruled, with the iron rod of a most despotic caste, by a class of priests called by the royal title of "Mahārājas." These have reduced

philosophical Epicureanism to practice in forms more hideous and degrading than almost any which the Hindu Pantheon could furnish. It was the fortune of Sir Joseph Arnould, the late Chief Justice of Bombay, to sit as judge at a trial which in its day caused unprecedented excitement among the Hindu community in Bombay, and went far to expose the practical horrors of the religion—if religion it can be called—of the Vallabhacharyas, effecting something, it may be hoped, towards a thorough reform of its monstrosities. The whole history of the Mahárāja trial is one of the greatest interest to any one who takes an interest in the ancient or modern religions of India. It has been recorded by a man who would have been remarkable in any age or country as a social reformer, and true martyr to his principles.

Kursandas Mulji, of the Kapole Banian caste, was born in 1832, at the village of Vadai, near Mhowa, in Kattiawar. He spent his boyhood with some rich relatives of his mother's in Bombay, where he got a good education in his own language, Guzerati, and in English. From his nineteenth to his twenty-second year he studied in the Elphinstone College, where he won a college prize for an essay on "Hindu Widow Marriage," and subsequently a prize offered by a Guzerati Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, for the best essay "On the Advantages of Foreign Travel to Hindus." It is possible that these two subjects gave a vent to his thoughts which influenced his after career. Leaving college, he took the post of head-master in a large school, but he soon gave up the Government service to return to Bombay, where he started a weekly newspaper in Guzerati, called the *Light of Truth* (*Satyaprakash*), devoted to the social and moral improvement of the Guzerati-speaking population of Bombay. In this periodical he exposed, with great tact and courage, the immoral practices of the Vaishnava Mahárājas, and the head priests of the Vallabhacharyan sect. So great was

the effect produced by his writings that after various ineffectual attempts to bribe him to silence, it was resolved to crush him by an action for libel. Unaided he could never have withstood the powerful combination against him. But his fearless vindication of truth and purity of life had secured him many powerful though secret friends, and funds were supplied him to defend the action. A trial which caused an unprecedented sensation throughout the whole Hindu community ended in a great moral triumph for Kursandas, and he might speedily have become a popular hero. But he had set before himself a definite plan for the moral improvement of his people, and in pursuit of this object he visited England in 1863, and recorded the results of his observations in his *Travels in England*, published in Guzerati and Maharatti, his main object being to induce his countrymen to visit Europe, and there learn practically how life may be restored to the decayed civilization and fossilized caste systems of India.

In 1865 he published in English the history of the contest in which he had been engaged, rightly judging that it would prove the turning-point in the moral and social reform of his people.

The book is remarkable in many ways. The hideousness of its revelations of the inner life among the priestly and upper classes in one of the richest and most luxurious of modern Hindu communities, is indeed repulsive. But every statement is supported either by references to the sacred books of the Hindus themselves or by quotations from the judicial evidence produced and sifted at the trial. There is a total absence of declamation and rhetorical clap-trap, and of egotism and personal self-glorification as rare in Hindu as in European reformers. The general result is a view of Hindu society in one large and influential sect very widely different from anything generally put forward by modern Hindu writers; different also from the descriptions usually given by European critics and observers. The difference in the latter

case is less in the facts and features observed than in the mode of accounting for them; and, in this respect, we rarely meet with anything written by our own countrymen more historically accurate, more sound in reasoning, or stated in better English than in the pages of the Hindu Reformer. His calm dispassionate and judicial statements are more trustworthy than the ideal Hinduism dreamed of and described by many modern Hindus and their European admirers, but never anywhere existing in India; and, we must add, his descriptions are more just than the pictures usually drawn by those who can see in Hinduism nothing but a stupid idolatry devoid of all remnants of original truth or reason.

The preface is an excellent sketch in a brief space of the growth and condition of the chief modern Hindu sects.

"It is still a general complaint that comparatively little is known of the religious, moral, and social state of the Hindus. This ignorance of their actual condition results not so much from a want of research and observation as from the limits imposed on inquiries respecting the people of India, conducted by distinguished scholars on the one hand and by popular writers on the other. The Orientalist, attracted by the singular philological and mythological curiosities which are discovered in the *Vedas*, the oldest of Sanskrit works, breathes so much of their ancient spirit, and sympathises so much with the pretensions ages ago urged in their behalf, that he believes they must to the present day have no small share of their ancient authority and respect. The popular observer looks merely to the surface of Hindu society, forgetful that the jealousy and secrecy of caste conceal to a great extent the mainspring of action of Hindu life. Even intelligent natives themselves look little beyond their own immediate sphere, having no care or interest in the affairs of their neighbours. Hinduism is consequently imagined to be very much an abiding and universal system of faith and manners, without reference to the great changes which it has undergone in the course of time, and the great diversity of the forms which it has assumed over the wide extent of this great and diversified country. The fact is, that within a certain range Hinduism has been ever on the move. The *Vedic* songs recognized, if not very clearly, the existence of the great Creator and Governor of the Universe. They contained many fresh and beautiful allusions to the phenomena of nature, and many striking personifications of the forces and agencies inter-

mediately regulating these phenomena. The lively spirit of these primitive songs had well-nigh entirely disappeared at the time of the composition of the *Bráhmaṇas* (or Brahmanical Directories), when reverential worship was to a great extent laid aside for the art of the magician and conjuror, dealing with the gods through *mantras*, charms and complicated ceremonial manipulations. The philosophical schools originating in the revolt of the inquiring mind of the country from the puerilities and inanities thus manifested formed a new era in which Atheistic and Pantheistic speculation became predominant. These schools prepared the way for the Buddhist Revolution, which gave social and religious liberty to all its adherents in opposition to the caste system which had become to be fostered by the Brahmins shortly after the entrance of the Aryans into India, and which almost completely altered the national creed. The revival of Brahmanism by the craft of its partisans and the persecution resorted to by its kingly adherent, after a thousand years' depression, was not effected in its pristine form. Its strength lay in its religious orders; and its champions, such as Sankarāchārya and his associates and successors, assumed an importance never before conceded to mere individuals of the priesthood. They became the oracles and pontiffs of the country; but they did not long maintain an undivided sway among its various tribes. The people of India had their favourite gods in the extensive Pantheon of Brahmanism, and particularly in its new established triads. The aggregation of legends connected with individual gods gave scope to the popular choice, and the spirit of sectarianism became rampant among them. The devotees of the different gods were the leaders in the movement, and everywhere they had a large following. One sect was for the supremacy of Vishnu; another for that of the deified King Krishna, set forth as an *avatāra* of Vishnu; a third for that of Siva; and a fourth for that of his consort (the Devi or goddess, emphatically so called), or of the female energies in general.

"In all these changes—for an elucidation of which in their main features the reader is referred to Professor H. H. Wilson's valuable sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus—the moral restraints of Hinduism, such as they were in the earlier days, have nearly perished. Krishna's conversion into the god of love and lust, and the worship of the Saktis or female energies, have introduced a moral plague into India, the ravages of which are both appalling and astounding. The readers of this history of the *Mahārāj* or *Vallabhāchārya* sect, and of the various documents included in its Appendix, will find this assertion but too amply vindicated. It is put forth simply in the interests of truth and purity. Its author does not apologise for its revelations, which have all been tested by the keen and impartial investigations of a court presided over by

British judges, but he expresses the hope that they will not be lost either upon the European or Indian public. The lessons which they teach are so obvious that it is not necessary to draw them in this place."

The author then gives an excellent, but very succinct sketch of Hindu religious books. He describes the principal religious sects of the Hindus and the causes which gave rise to them, quoting Professor H. H. Wilson to show how the *Puranas*, and similar comparatively modern works, not only taught their followers to assert the unapproachable superiority of the special members of the Hindu Pantheon to which each work referred, but inspired them with feelings of animosity towards all other sects. In this conflict the worship of Brahma and of almost the whole old Pantheon except Vishnu, Siva, Sakti or their modifications disappeared. "With respect to the two former," he adds, "the representatives have borne away the palm from the prototypes, and Krishna, Rāma, or the Linga (phallus) are almost the only forms under which Vishnu and Siva are now adored in most parts of India."

Had these heresies been purely speculative they would have encountered little opposition from the Brahmins, among whom, as Wilson justly says, "latitude of opinion is a very common characteristic;" but Vrihaspati, the founder of an atheistical school, attacked both the Brahmins and their sacred books, asserting that the whole Hindu system was a contrivance of the priesthood for selfish and secular ends, while the Buddhists and Jainas invented new gods and deposed the ancient Pantheon. The result was the expulsion of the Buddhists, of whom no trace now remains in India save the relics of countless temples and a few opinions which they shared with the Jainas who survived the storm. About nine centuries ago, our author tells us, the worshippers of Vishnu, Siva, and Sakti, spread into a multitude of sects, which the great Brahmanical reformer, Sankacharanya, in vain attempted to reunite in the worship of a supreme sole

ruler of the universe; and in a century or two after his death the Hindu religion had assumed very nearly the form which we now find most prevalent. Our author points out the extreme rarity now-a-days of any one who can in any logical sense be considered an orthodox Hindu of any ancient school, and observes that "a very remarkable feature of sectarianism in the present day is that the distinction of caste almost merges in the identity of schism."

His enumeration of the chief sects into which the religion is now divided contains no less than fifty-two principal divisions, with innumerable subdivisions and sects of minor importance. His description is well worth studying, as illustrating the inaccuracy of our usual conception of Hinduism as a uniform or ancient system of faith; and as proving that the Hindu religion is what he describes it, "a maze of confusion, the interminable intricacies of which cannot be threaded for want of a clue."

He then traces the descent of his own sect, the Vallabhachāryas, from the great body of Vaishnavas or worshippers of Vishnu. He describes the chief ceremony of initiation, which in all Hindu sects is the communication by the teacher to the disciple of the "mantra," a charm which generally consists in the name of some deity, or a short address to him, communicated in a whisper, and never made known by the adept to profane ears. The Vaishnava sects were severally distinguished by the degree in which they identified Vishnu with other manifestations of the Deity, by their tenets as to the form or quality of the Deity and the unity or diversity of the divinity. Some, like the disciples of Kabir, formed an eclectic system, in which many traces of Mussulman and Christian doctrine may be found. In others may be found almost every form of moral doctrine, from that of absolute asceticism and devotion to the worship of a simple spiritual deity, down to the boldest atheism. But, as our author tells us, the opulent, the luxurious, and the self-

indulgent in a large mass of society, especially females, are apt to attach themselves to the worship of Krishna, "adored under this name and his wife Rádhá either conjointly or singly, by the names of Vishnu and Lakshmi." But there is a still more popular form of the worship of the divinity than this, namely, that of Bala Krishna, or the "Infant Krishna," a worship widely diffused throughout all ranks of Indian society under the image of an unclothed child resting on his knees and left hand, while in the right hand he holds a ball. The founder of this sect was Vallabhacharya, the son of a Talinga Brahman, who lived in the sixteenth century, and persuaded his followers that he had been promised by the god Krishna that he should have three sons, the second of whom should succeed him as the incarnation of the god. While on a pilgrimage at Benares the parents of Vallabha fled from a violent conflict between the Hindus and Mussulmans, and in the midst of a wilderness in Champoran, Vallabha was prematurely born, A.D. 1479. The legends relate that the wild jungle immediately became illumined by celestial visions; and the child, abandoned by its parents in their continued flight, was afterwards found alive and well, playing in the midst of a volume of sacrificial fire. As he grew up he was supernaturally enlightened in all the learning of the Hindus, and travelling southward towards the land of his ancestry, he became distinguished as a disputant in the schools of philosophy, which then flourished at every Hindu court, and was elected by the worshippers of Vishnu as their leader or "Acharya." After wonderful travels he was rewarded by a visit from the god Krishna, who enjoined him to introduce the worship of the infant Krishna, which has ever since been one of the most popular forms of Hinduism, though it has long degenerated into a kind of practical Epicureanism, very different from what its founder appears to have contemplated. Even during his lifetime, however, it was known as the "Pushti Marga," or

"eat and drink doctrine," and during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was spread over all western and central India by his descendants, who in the third generation appear to have assumed the title of Maharája or Great Ruler. The sect is now widely diffused throughout the whole of the Bombay Presidency, Central India, and Malwar. They everywhere include some of the most opulent merchants and princes from Juggernaut on the east to the western boundary of Scinde. The descendants of the founder have now multiplied to about sixty or seventy persons, who are known as Maharájas, and are dispersed throughout India. Only two or three have any knowledge of Sanscrit, the rest being "grossly ignorant and indulging merely in sensuality and luxury."

They never take the trouble to preach, "but give as an equivalent public exhibitions in their temples to divert attention. Vallabhacharya taught that privation formed no part of sanctity, and that it was the duty of the teacher and his disciples to worship their deity not in nudity and hunger, but in costly apparel and choice food—not in solitude and mortification, but in the pleasures of society and the enjoyment of the world. In accordance with these precepts, the gosáins, or teachers, are always clothed in the best raiment and fed with the daintiest viands by their followers, over whom they have unlimited influence. These gosáins are often largely engaged in maintaining connection amongst commercial establishments in remote parts of the country; they are constantly travelling over India under pretence of pilgrimage to the sacred shrines of the sect, and on these occasions they notoriously reconcile the profits of trade with the benefits of devotion. As religious travellers, however, this union of objects renders them more respectable than the vagrants of any other sect. Priestly craft is ever alert to obtain, by fair means or foul, the wealth needful to the sustentation of its power and self-indulgence. The source of the permanent revenue of these priests is a fixed *lágá* or tax upon every article of consumption which is sold by their votaries.

"This tax, although but trifling in each individual case, amounts to a considerable sum upon the innumerable commercial transactions that take place, and is always multiplied in each case where articles pass from hand to hand for a consideration. When, therefore, we consider the swarming population, the great consumption, and consequently the thriving business that is carried on, and the fact that

the fixed revenue is often greatly augmented by the presents and votive offerings which are made by their followers from affection or fear, the wealth, indolence, and luxury of the Mahārājas follow as a matter of course, and the corruption of society ensues as the result of their dissolute and effeminate teaching. Like the deadly upas, they overshadow society with their malignant influences, in Western India especially, and it is with a view to counteract this blighting tendency that the present work has been undertaken, in the hope that the exposure of their acts and doctrines may eventually bring their converts to reflect upon the depravity of their practices, and the utter incompatibility of such vicious doings with a pure faith. The original teachers may have been well-disposed men, but their descendants have widely diverged from their courses. The infatuation of the Vaishnavas is so great that all the descendants of the Mahārājas are held from infancy in extreme veneration, and are nurtured in ignorance, indolence, and self-indulgence; they are empowered by their votaries to gratify through life every vicious propensity; and when, exhausted by vice, they pass away in premature old age, they are held by their votaries to be translated to the regions of perfect and ecstatic bliss; for, as remarked by Mr. H. H. Wilson, it is a peculiarly remarkable feature in this sect that the veneration paid to their gosāins is paid solely to their descent, without any reference to their individual sanctity or learning; and although totally destitute of every pretension to even personal respectability, they nevertheless enjoy the unlimited homage of their followers."

The chief scriptural authority of this sect is the *Bhagavata Purana*, in the tenth book of which the history of Krishna, as the eighth incarnation of Vishnu, is given in ninety chapters. These have been translated from the Sanskrit into the language of Brij, under the name of *Prem Sagar*, or "Ocean of Love," selected by Vallabha as the foundation of his doctrines, and from which he deduced the ideas which have gradually expanded into the desecrating libertinism practised by his descendants. Our author quotes at great length from this work, which it is curious to remark was long one of the text-books in which young English students were required to pass their examination in Hindi. The work is held in the highest authority by the sect as a revelation from the Deity himself. Our author observes that "its true character is doubtless symbolical or allegorical, whereas the Mahārājas by

interpreting it literally, have converted its abstruse significations into a code of vicious immorality, not merely sanctioning, but inculcating the most hideous sensuality."

The following are the religious doctrines of the sect as described by our author. Vallabha and all his descendants are incarnations of the God Krishna. His residence is far above the three worlds, having, at five hundred millions of Yojans below it, the separate regions of Vishnu and Siva, which may give some idea of the immeasurable superiority attributed to this sect by its disciples as compared with other sects of Hindus. The region (Gouloka) is indestructible while everything else is subject to annihilation. In its centre abides Krishna, of the colour of a dark cloud, in the bloom of youth, clad in yellow raiment, splendidly adorned with celestial gems and holding a flute. He is surrounded by his wife Radha, and three hundred millions of Gopis or female companions, each holding a separate palace of her own with three millions of female attendants. Two of these Gopis once quarrelled about the god, and, having cursed each other, the effect was such that they fell from heaven with all their retinue. Krishna, out of affection to them, descended to earth and took the form of a man to effect their restoration, and appeared first in the form of the founder of the sect, and afterwards of his son, in whose form he completed the salvation of both Gopis with their millions of attendants. The same process is repeated by successive generations of Mahārājas. Born as incarnations of Krishna, they redeem their followers by sending them to Gouloka, where the disciple, if a male, is changed into a Gopi and obtains the everlasting happiness of living in perpetual intercourse with Krishna in the heavens. On the authority of this childish legend are founded the doctrines of the sect, the "Pushti Manga," or way of enjoyment, a sort of creed for the convenience of votaries who had neither leisure, education nor inclination to study the doctrines in detail. There are ten principal tenets inculcating the

duty of belief in the legend with only two moral precepts, which are to adopt the society of the good, knowing them to be divine, and to see not the faults but speak the truth. In his account of the divine revelation of his tenets Vallabha states that they were revealed to him at midnight on a given date, when God visibly uttered words which are here repeated word for word. "By entering into relation with Brahma all persons' sins of body and mind are washed away." Then follows a description of the different kinds of sin which it is stated ceased to exist after the above relation with Brahma has been established. Nothing must be accepted by the disciple till it has been dedicated to the Deity, and nothing dedicated which has not been offered. This seems to be the root of all those doctrines of the sect which gave its priests such unlimited power over the persons and possessions of their votaries. "Here," says our author, "we have the doctrine of the origin of sin and its mode of expiation or absolution, and here is the first insinuation of the paramount importance of the Guru teacher as the direct mediator.

Then follows an enumeration of the indescribable torments which await the sixty-seven mortal sins, many of which are connected with disrespect or disregard for the spiritual teacher. Everywhere the teacher is described as the Deity himself:—

"Totally without desires, without wants, with all desires fulfilled, possessed of all virtues, the head of all those who appreciate sensual or intellectual pleasure or poetry, desirous of fulfilling the wishes of his devotees, why should he want anything, himself the creator of endless crores (ten millions) wherein his glory is diffused all over? Inspirer or propeller of the souls of all animated beings, he is to be regarded as God—nay, even greater than God, for if God gets angry, the Guru Dava, or Divine Teacher, is able to save, whereas if the Guru is displeased, nobody is able to save."

In order that the offerings to the Mahārāja should be unlimited it is not prescribed what they are to be. *Everything* is to be offered, and the promised

reward is the highest heaven, whereas the mere worship of God entitles only to an inferior paradise.

All earthly possessions are summed up in the three expressions "Tan," i.e., the body is all its relations—"Man," the mind, with all its faculties and qualities; and "Dhan," all earthly possessions and relations. Everything must be offered to the Mahārāja before it can be rightfully enjoyed by the owner.

These doctrines are the foundation of the horrible practices which led to the trial before the High Court in Bombay. Curious extracts are given from a work published in 1860, by a Society for the Diffusion of the Vishnava Religion. It explains the Pantheistic doctrine, that the whole universe is the spirit of God, and has become in parts all forms, so that in everything done in the world "He is at play with His own spirit." "With God, therefore, the relation of my own and another's does not exist; all is His own; consequently sin," even the grossest, "does not affect Him." The sin of enjoying other people's things affects *this* world. "With God, nothing whatever is alien—God has therefore ordained sin for this world," and so on, ending in a justification of every kind of the grossest immorality. It is one of the curious results of the European civilization which is pervading India, that the infamous doctrines inculcated by this book should be printed and published under a name which signifies "Promoter of our religion and Destroyer of doubt." Our author's chapter on this subject closes with a list of seventy-four works, which are authorities with this sect. More than half of them are translations from Sanskrit works written with great learning and acuteness. The author next gives an account of the forms of worship and psalmody of the sect, the servile ceremonies with which [the Mahārājas are adored as] incarnations of the divinity by their followers, their wonderfully luxurious living, and the curious mixture of religion and epicurean indulgences which characterise all their proceedings.

The effect of these doctrines, pervading it must be remembered not an obscure or small sect, but one of the largest and richest mercantile communities in Western India, is, of course, most marked in the weaker sex. Our author observes :—

"These preceptors imbue their teachings with the idea that all emanates from the highest source of spiritual inspiration, they themselves being absolutely its full impersonation upon earth ; and their doctrines impressively inculcating that they are even superior to the Divinity Himself, because, although ostensibly the mere medium of communication between Him and the worshippers, they can save when it is beyond the power of God, and can grant absolution and ensure pardon to the positive certainty of their votaries evidently enjoying the delights of paradise. The moral nature of the devotees being thus controlled and subjugated, they succumb slavishly to the infatuation, unconscious of the foul snare into which they fall ; and, under the supposition that they obtain honour and spiritual exaltation by immoral contact with these incarnations of Deity, lend themselves willingly to minister to their corrupt pleasures. The Mahārāj is invited to the houses of the Vaihnavas when they are sick, or on the point of death ; in the latter case he puts his foot on the breast of the dying person with a view to free him from sin, and receives in return for the blessings he thus confers from ten to a thousand rupees. In Bombay alone there are from forty to fifty thousand Valabbhacharyans. We may therefore form some conception of the manner in which the depravity of the priests percolates through this community, which includes some of the most wealthy and most intelligent inhabitants of Bombay ; and to how much greater an extent it may indirectly corrupt society by its contaminating influence. The Vaihnavas are strictly prohibited from showing to the followers of other sects the book containing the poetry, and indeed all the books issued by the Mahārājas."

The preliminary initiation of the Vallabbhacharyans commences very early in life. The first instruction takes place at the age of two, three, or four years. The child is then taken to the Mahārāj, who repeats to it the "Astakshar mantra," or formula of eight letters, namely, "Sri Krishna is my refuge." This the child is made to repeat after the Mahārāj, who then passes round its neck a string of beads, and the ceremony is complete. The second initiation, called by a name which signifies "consignment," takes place at the end of eleven

or twelve years, or in the case of a female upon her marriage. The initiated then becomes a full member of the sect, and is fitted for the duties of life. This is the celebrated absolute self-dedication to Krishna, and his incarnation the Mahārāj, and is known by a Sanskrit name signifying "union with the Supreme Being." The votary is required to repeat the formula daily mentally, and alone after bathing, and it may not be recited to any one. It is in Sanskrit, and runs thus :—

"Om. Sri Krishna is my refuge. I who am suffering the infinite pain and torment produced by enduring for a thousand measured years separation from Krishna, do to the worshipful Krishna consecrate my body, organs of sense, life, heart, and other faculties, and wife, house, family, property, with my own self. I am thy slave, O Krishna!"

"For the performance of each of these ceremonies the Mahārāj is paid a fee in money, which is not usually restricted to the prescribed amount, but is ordinarily accompanied with collateral presents, depending upon the opulence, position, or devotion of the votary." [This profession absolves from all sins previously committed.] "It is not a barren principle, it must bear fruit ; as the preceptor says : 'To each of us (himself a Krishna) you thus offer your body, your soul, your wives, your sons, your daughters, your body, mind, and property. Before you enjoy any portion of 'dhan' you must offer it, him, or her to your God, personified in us.' 'The new full sectary,' observes Karsandas, 'thus goes forth, although disencumbered of his sins, yet heavily burdened morally, and without a claim to any possession, for in this formality he has renounced every possession to his Mahārāj.'"

After describing the marks and secret signs by which the Sectarics recognize each other, our author proceeds :

"He goes forth thus to be recognized by his brother Sectarics" as the enthusiastic devotee of the Mahārāj "to whom he has desecrated the purity of his home under the terrible threat of the denial 'of the deliverance of his soul and of its reabsorption into the divine essence ;' under the threat here, also, of excommunication from all intercourse with his fellow devotees, and under the prohibition of enjoying food, or participation in the worship of his idol. His contempt can be purged only by presents and submission, or by the strong act of renunciation of the sect, which few have the moral courage to resolve upon, chained as they are by the relations of life or the artificial bondage of a conventional condition of society."

Of course the case is even worse with regard to the female devotees. After describing the puerile and immoral forms of this so-called religion, our author observes:—

"It must astonish every one that such debasing practices should proceed from the religious code of intelligent, if not educated persons; and those who are accustomed to think and to test everything by reason and common sense, can scarcely believe that such fanaticism can exist in an enlightened age. India was the centre of civilization for ages, while other portions of the world were in a state of barbarism; and it is, therefore, the more remarkable that it should be the *locus* of this pestilential moral miasma, which the rapid and almost universal spread of intelligence has failed to dissipate. The existence of so foul a plague-spot would suggest that our moral nature has its antithetical phases, and, like the luminaries of the sky, is now at its zenith and now at its nadir: and that the absolute progression of our race without divine aid is but an idle dream and a baseless hope. It would almost seem to be the duty of the rulers of the realm of India to prohibit these practices in the interest of our common humanity, leaving to public opinion the delicate task of correcting mere social follies and aberrations. Our governors may be legitimately held to be guardians of public morals. At any rate the efforts of philanthropists for the enlightenment and reformation of India should be increased a hundredfold."

A separate chapter is devoted to the effects of the doctrines and worship of this sect, and quotes the elaborate judgment of Sir Joseph Arnould to show how fatally this form of Epicureanism must undermine the foundation of society; and a cloud of witnesses and quotations, some selected from the literary productions of the sect or its critics, others taken from the evidence adduced at the trial, testify to the ineffable horrors which are the result, and to the moral paralysis which takes from the votaries all power of freeing themselves from its thralldom.

A curious chapter is devoted to the oppressive exactions of the Mahārājas. The sumptuous entertainments with which they are welcomed in their travels, the costly penalties with which all offences against their will are punished, and the system of self-taxation by which an immense revenue is raised by the sect for the priests. Their votaries are among the most active traders in Western India

—the traffic in cloth is almost monopolized by them, and they are great dealers in every important article of trade. The system of taxation appears to date no further back than 1811, but it has been most regular, and has raised the owner of the great Temple in Bombay to a place among the richest inhabitants of the second largest city in the British Empire. The regular money contributions are not less than 16,000*l.* per annum.

When it became apparent that some of their practices might bring them within the scope of the British laws, the caste leaders proposed an agreement appropriately known as the "Slavery Bond," binding the community never to summon a Mahārāj into a Court of Justice, and to spare no expense to protect him should he be summoned by others. Reluctance was naturally shown by some of the sect to sign such a document, but the Mahārājas closed the doors of their temples for eight days, at the end of which time the sect generally gave in and signed the document.

But a day of retribution was at hand. Among the causes which led them into difficulties are enumerated religious disputes between them and the Brahmans; secondly, their attempts to set up immunity from attendance in Courts of Justice, the criticism of the public press, and their infatuated mistake in endeavouring to enforce the "Slavery Bond." This part of their history is full of interest as an illustration of the mode in which the system of the British Government in India reacts on the most corrupt and fossilized superstitions. Orthodox Hindus of other sects entered into controversy with the Vashnavas, to prove that profligacy is nowhere inculcated in the sacred books of the Hindus, and rests on a corruption of symbolism from its true meaning, introduced by infamous men to sanction their own deeds. Public discussions between Brahmans and the Mahārājas led to newspaper controversy. The newspaper already referred to, started by a Vishnava Reformer, edited by Karsandas Mulji, and called the *Light of Truth*, soon obtained a wide circulation. An attempt to

claim exemption from the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in 1856 was defeated by the firmness of the Court. "The community was thoroughly aroused, and men began to think, to talk and to act. The press, stimulated by this movement of society, gained courage to make its comments. Not only the fifteen or sixteen Guzerati papers which at that time were printed in the vernacular idioms, but three or four English local papers discussed the practice of the Mahārājas and 'greatly shocked the feeling of the public who had no conception of the enormities thus exposed.'" The great mover in this reform was Karsandas. No pains were spared to intimidate or bribe him. Among other means his opponents subsidized another native newspaper called the *Whip*, and endeavoured to effect a combination of their caste, some of the members of which were on Her Majesty's commission of the peace, and members of the grand jury. Karsandas was to be excommunicated, and an appeal was to be made to the Legislative Council to pass an act which would secure a permanent exemption to the Mahārājas from attendance in Courts of Justice. Among the objects to which the caste was to bind itself, were :—

"(1). That a barrister of first-rate talents should be sent to England with a view to secure a permanent exemption for the Mahārājas from attending in courts of justice. For this purpose 60,000 rupees are to be subscribed among the Hindus. (2). That all cases in which the Mahārājas happen to be one of the contending parties, should be referred to arbitration. (3). That persons criticising the doings of Mahārājas, even in a spirit of fairness, should be punished with excommunication."

Karsandas retaliated by a series of admirable articles in the *Light of Truth*, exposing the folly as well as the wickedness of the combination against him, and appealing to a just Providence to support the justice of his cause. This appeal to publicity had a great effect in breaking up the combination; but after further consultation the Mahārājas resolved to attempt to crush the heroic editor and his supporters by an action for libel. All the tyrannical power of

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caste was invoked to support the prosecution, but the attempt brought them within the arm of the law, and some of the leading members of the community were convicted of conspiracy, and fined by the English Chief Justice. This naturally increased the public excitement regarding the trial, which reached such a height that nothing but the strenuous exertions of a powerful police prevented personal violence to Karsandas, the defendant. This case came on for trial in January 1862. All the ablest barristers in Bombay were arrayed on both sides, the defence being conducted by the late Mr. Chisholm Austie, whose wonderful learning and intense earnestness found an appropriate field in defending the cause of truth and free thought and liberty of speech. The trial extended over forty days, sixty witnesses were examined, including not only the chief members of the sect on both sides of the question, but learned Europeans like Dr. Wilson, and educated native gentlemen, who felt that they were advancing the best interests of Hindu society, in probing to the bottom such a widespread moral cancer. The results were thus well expressed by Sir Joseph Arnould; after arguing that the time of the court had been wasted on such a trial, he said :—

"It seems impossible that this matter should have been discussed thus openly before a population so intelligent as that of the natives of Western India without producing its results. It has probably taught some to think; it must have led many to inquire. It is not a question of theology which has been before us; it is a question of morality. The principle for which the defendant (Karsandas) and his witnesses have been contending is simply this, that what is morally wrong cannot be theologically right; that when practices which sap the very foundations of morality, which involve a violation of the eternal and immutable laws of Right are established in the name and under the sanction of Religion, they ought for the common welfare of society, and in the interest of humanity itself, to be publicly denounced and exposed. They have denounced, they have exposed them. At a risk and at a cost which we cannot adequately measure, these men have done determined battle against a foul and powerful delusion. They have dared to look custom and error boldly in the face, and proclaim before the world of their votaries that their evil is not good, that their lie is not the

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truth. In thus doing they have done bravely and well. It may be allowable to express a hope that what they have done will not have been in vain; that the seed they have sown will bear its fruit; that their courage and consistency will be rewarded by a steady increase in the number of those whom their words and their examples have quickened into thought and animated resistance, whose homes they have helped to cleanse from loathsome sensuality, and whose souls they have set free from a debasing bondage."

Every one will concur in the remarks with which Karsandas concludes his history of the case:—

"The history of the sect of Vallabhāchārya which has been here unfolded reads like a chapter of romance. It is the history of a sect in which immorality is elevated to the rank of a divine law. The immutable distinctions of right and wrong, the sharp line of demarcation between virtue and vice, human personality and human responsibility, are lost and confounded in a system of theology which begins in sensuality and ends in the complete subversion of the first principles of our common nature. Such a system has perhaps no parallel in the annals of our race. Its effects can be more easily conceived than described. It has checked and arrested the healthy growth of all moral power. It has furnished its votaries with principles of action which, if carried out in their integrity, must produce the dissolution of society; for it treats holiness in life as a crime, and proclaims to 'the world and its votaries' that man becomes acceptable to his Maker *in and through sin*. It would be strange indeed if the discussions awakened by the trial should bring about no tangible result. The sect, though to all appearance powerful in organization, is in an unsettled state. While the old and bigoted cling with pertinacity to the dogmas of their childhood, the young and the educated detach themselves more and more from its contaminating influences. Assailed from without and racked by internal dissensions, the Vallabhāchāryan faith must sooner or later be superseded by a more rational form of worship. The obstacles in the way of a thorough revolution are great but not insurmountable. That the power of the Mahārājas for evil is not what it was fifteen years ago, is one sign of progress. Let us express a fervent hope that by the combined exertions and the steady co-operation of all lovers of truth and moral purity, the Vallabhāchāryas may emerge from the darkness of error and falsehood into the glorious light of day, and that the faith proclaimed by Vallabha four hundred years ago may be crushed by the weight of its own enormities."

The subsequent career of Karsandas in no way belied the promise of this his first effort at social reform. He twice visited England, and wrote an admirable history of his travels, which was translated into Guzerati and Mahratti, and is deservedly regarded as a valuable addition to modern and original Hindu literature; but in visiting Europe he brought himself within the power of those members of his caste who had a grudge against him for the manner in which he had exposed the numerous wickednesses of their religious leaders. He was excommunicated and expelled from caste. He might at any time have purchased readmission, by submission to the caste rulers, by the payment of a small fine and by performing one or two childish but degrading ceremonies, which he justly considered as derogatory to the dignity of a human being. It is difficult for any European to realize the temporal and spiritual terror of caste excommunication. I have heard few things more pathetic than a detail of them from one who has suffered them for the cause of truth; but Karsandas scorned to obtain immunity from such punishment by any admission which he felt to be contrary to truth, and he remained excommunicated up to the day of his death, which was, no doubt, hastened by the wearing persecution to which he was subjected. But though firm as a rock when his principles were at stake, I never met a man of more modest or unassuming demeanour, with less self-seeking and more of the spirit of the true martyr. I know of no more hopeful sign for the future of the races of Hindostan than the existence among them of men like Karsandas Mulji; and I can testify from my own knowledge that Karsandas was by no means a solitary example of high moral excellence developed under circumstances which at first sight seemed sufficient to blight anything like sound moral feeling.

To be continued.

NOTES ON THE FIRTH.

I.—FROM A FOURTH-PAIR WINDOW.

THE sky is dappled blue with clouds that stray.
 Like frozen waves the roofs go rolling down
 The valley steeps, but weatherworn and brown
 Steeple and stack shoot mastlike toward the day.

Pandean pipes whereon the winds would play,
 Long rows of chimney pots the ridges crown;
 And black on slates and skylights flicker and frown
 Shadows of smoke that streams and wings that sway.

The city's monstrous voices surge to me,
 The mist afar its fantasies arranges,
 And sudden windows twinkle joyously.

A blue grey streak, a fixed uncertainty,
 A fallen slip of sky that shifts and changes,
 The Forth beyond them broadens into sea.

II.—AT QUEENSFERRY.

The blackbird sang, the skies were clear and clean.
 We bowled along a road that curved its spine
 Superbly sinuous and serpentine
 Thro' silent symphonies of glowing green.

Sudden the Firth came on us—sad of mien,
 No cloud to colour it, no breeze to line,
 A sheet of dark, dull glass, without a sign
 Of life or death, two shelves of sand between.

Water and sky merged blank in mist together,
 The fort loomed spectral, and the guardship's spars
 Traced vague, black shadows on the shimmery glaze.

We felt the dim strange years, the grey strange weather,
 The still strange land unvexed of sun or stars,
 Where Lancelot rides clanking thro' the haze.

III.—FORENOON.

Soft as the whisper shut within a shell,
 The far sea rustles white along the sand;
 A tiny breeze, blown wanton from the land,
 Be-dimples it with kisses visible.

A dim, blue dream, the Fife hills sink and swell;
 The large light quivers, and from strand to strand
 A vast content seems, breathing, to expand,
 And the deep heaven smiles down a sleepy spell.

Black bathers dance; the girders of the pier
 Stand softened forth against the quiet blue;
 Dogs bark, and wading children take their pleasure.

A horse comes charging round, and I can hear
 The gallop's wild waltz rhythm, falling thro',
 Change to the trot's deliberate polka measure.

IV.—VENUS EN HERBE.

Ten summers old the little maid appears,
 With March blue eyes and hair of pale March gold,
 And full red lips, yet ignorant and cold,
 And peachbloom cheeks, unstained of any tears.

Sweet with the supple promise that endears,
 Her shape suggests a tale of love half told,
 Her dainty dress falls graceful, fold on fold,
 With all the careless charm of perfect years.

Her slim legs' languid pose, her subtle, sweet
 And sudden changing glance, the innocent wile
 In her child laugh reveal her further yet:

A sketch that Time, the artist, will complete
 With loving tones and touches, till it smile
 On all the world, an exquisite coquette.

V.—MUSIC AMBULANT.

The beach was crowded. Pausing now and then,
 He groped and fiddled doggedly along,
 His worn face beaming on the thoughtless throng
 The stony peevishness of sightless men.

He seemed scarce older than his clothes. Again,
 Grotesquing thinly many an old sweet song,
 So cracked his viol, his hand so frail and wrong,
 You hardly could distinguish one in ten.

He stopped at last, and sat him on the sand,
 And, grasping wearily his bread-winner,
 Stared dim toward the blue immensity,

Then leaned his head upon his poor old hand.
 He may have slept, he did not speak or stir,
 His pose expressed a vast despondency.

VI.—BACK VIEW.

I watched you saunter down the sand,
Serene and large, the golden weather
Flowed radiant round your peacock feather,
And glistered from your jewelled hand.
Your tawny hair, turned strand on strand
And bound with ribands blue together,
Streaked the rough tartan, green like heather,
That round your lissome shoulder spanned.
Your grace was quick my sense to seize.
The quaint, looped hat, the twisted tresses,
The close-drawn scarf, and under these
The flowing, flapping draperies—
My thought your outline still caresses,
Rococo, charming, Japanese!

VII.—DOGS ON THE BEACH.

This to the dog must be a paradise!
Free as the wind his instincts he enjoys,
Horses he frightens, children he decoys,
Policemen and the muzzle he defies.
He swims, barks, races, basks and snaps at flies.
Life is to him a space of blissful noise,
All sun and sea, and stones and idle boys,
And sand his ideal cave to realize.
See the retriever burrowing quite alone!
Mark you the orgasm tremulous in his tail,
His flaglike ears, wild eyes, and eager tongue!
He stops, he trots to find a certain stone,
Superb and slow returning—as to hail
Saved by his act the country whence he sprang!

VIII.—RAIN.

The sky sags low with convoluted cloud,
Heavy and imminent, rolled from rim to rim,
And wreaths of mist be-veil the further brim
Of the leaden sea, all spiritless and cowed.
The rain is falling sheer and strong and loud,
The strand is desolate, the distance grim
With stormful threats, the wet stones glisten dim,
And to the wall the dank umbrellas crowd.
At home!—the soaked shrubs whisper dismal-mooded,
The rails are strung with drops, and steeped the grasses,
Black chimney-shadows streak the shiny slates.
A draggled fishwife screeches at the gates,
The baker hurries dripping on, and hooded
In her stained skirt a pretty housemaid passes.

IX.—FISHWIFE.

A hard north-easter fifty winters long
Has bronzed and shrivelled sere her face and neck;
Her locks are wild and grey, her teeth a wreck;
Her foot is huge, her bowed leg spare and strong.

A wide blue cloak, a squat and sturdy throng
Of brief blue coats, a mutch without a speck,
A white vest broidered black, her person deck,
Nor seems their stern and old-world quaintness wrong.

Her great creel forehead slung, she wanders nigh,
Easing the heavy strap with gnarled, brown fingers,
A deep esurience in her anxious eye,

Ever and anon imploring you to buy,
As looking down the street she onward lingers,
Reproachful, with a strange and doleful cry.

X.—TWILIGHT.

The sunset's roses faint and fain decline.
Inshore the still sea shimmers scale on scale,
Like an enormous coat of magic mail—
Sheet silver shot with tremulous opaline.

Rare boats traverse it, glidingly supine.
The Inchkeith light by moments flashes pale.
The distance darkles, and a far grey sail
Melts vague into the solemn evenshine.

The thickening dusk is quick with pattering feet
And swishing dresses, and the airs of June
With broad sea scents and blown cigars are sweet;

And over yonder, where the ripples beat,
Sweethearts are wandering, while the yellowing moon
Sails the blue lift, and wide stars glance and greet.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY.

THE EXPLORING EXPEDITIONS TO WESTERN YUNNAN OF 1868 AND 1875.

DURING the last few months the public mind has been agitated by the questions arising out of the murder of Mr. Margary, and the forcible stoppage of a peaceful party of British explorers on the frontier of Burmah and China. The expedition was under the permission and protection of the King of Burmah. Mr. Margary travelled with special passports and authority from the Pekin Government. There have appeared many articles, some temperately discussing the question as to the really guilty parties; others intemperately assuming the treachery of either or both of the Burmese and Chinese. While hearing the frequent discussions of the subject, the writer has been made aware that the train of events which culminated in the tragedy of February 21st is very partially known, save to the few who have been especially interested therein.

Now that it is almost certain that the Chinese Government will be required to render access to Yunnan secure, as well as to punish the guilty parties, a brief sketch of these events will be not unacceptable to many; and no one need dread a discussion of rival trade routes, or intrusion on the province of our diplomatists. Both commerce and science have always had their martyrs. To judge the guilty, and apportion punishment, is not the province of the votaries of either the one or the other.

Ten years ago our knowledge of the country lying between the kingdom of Burmah and the Western Chinese province of Yunnan was partial and inexact. The rapid development of the new British port of Rangoon had begun to force our merchants' attention to the possibility of overland trade between Burmah and China. Tradition and history pointed to such a trade as having long existed *via* Bhamo, a town

on the upper Irrawaddy. Burmese annals told of wars with China, arising out of wrongs done to Chinese merchants, and of treaties in which the chief article referred to the re-opening of the "gold and silver road," and the restoration of former commerce.

The almost forgotten observations of Hannay, Bayfield, Symes, and other Englishmen, testified to the importance of the trade carried on, and of Bhamo as the emporium.

Baron des Granges in 1848, and Dr. Clement Williams in 1863, had urged the claims of this line of communication on all interested in the matter; and Colonel Phayre had secured in the Burmese treaty of 1862 a clause allowing and regulating British trade in and through Upper Burmah. But during the previous decade, or since 1855, the old Bhamo trade, computed by Colonel Yule to have yearly amounted to half-a-million sterling, was said to have ceased. Such scanty commerce as was still carried on between the new Burmese capital, Mandalay, and Yunnan, was conducted by the tedious overland route, *via* Theinnee, a journey requiring nearly two months to accomplish it. This change, though suspiciously coincident with the British occupation of Pegu, was said to be due to the Mohammedan rebellion in Yunnan, which had been devastating that wide province since 1855. As an ally, if not as an actual tributary of China, the King of Burmah could not risk dealing with the rebels; and the condition of the border populations affected was not clearly known. The commercial community of Rangoon pressed upon the Government the desirability of at least investigating the actual state of things.

It might be that the old channel of trade only needed to be cleared of ob-

structions that the auriferous stream might flow again. Visions of imports of Manchester goods, and return cargoes of the rich products of Yunnan, Kweichau, or even Szechwan, presented themselves to many a far-seeing merchant. The then Commissioner, Colonel Fytche, was not slow to forward the views of the community under his care. In 1867 he obtained the consent of the Indian Government to the despatch of an exploring party of British officers and commercial representatives, charged to examine the routes from Bhamo to Yunnan, and penetrate, if possible, to Talifu. The King of Burmah gave a ready consent to the passage of the expedition through his territory. A royal proclamation was issued, commanding all officials to render every aid in their power; and a royal steamer was placed at the disposal of Major Sladen, then resident at Mandalay, and the appointed leader of the expedition. The English members of the party represented engineering science and the mercantile interests, and an escort of fifty armed police accompanied them. The first steamer voyage, *en* Bhamo, was accomplished in eight days without mishap, which was reached January 13, 1868. From this town the high range of the Kakhyen hills could be seen stretching away in an unbroken line. Across and beyond there lay the route leading to the desired goal; but a month's delay had to elapse before the departure from Bhamo could be effected. In the absence of governor or woon,—the former holder of the office having been killed, while his successor delayed his arrival,—the subordinate magistrates were timorous, and disinclined to act; the Chinese merchants of Bhamo having first tried to daunt the new comers by predictions of failure, set to work to intrigue for their destruction. No wonder, if they regarded these foreign interlopers as heralds of a movement which would break down their long-possessed monopoly.

Li-see-thai, a name now familiar to English ears, was then first heard of. He is of mixed Chinese and Burmese

extraction, and was at that time a partisan of the Imperialist Chinese, who still waged a guerilla war against the successful Mohammedans holding a position which commanded the road to the first leading Pantha town, Momien, or Teng-ye-chow. He was now engaged by the Bhamo Chinese—who represented the English as friends of the Mohammedans—to attack the party in their advance. Having become acquainted with this danger, by a successful counter move, the British leader secretly sent letters to the Mohammedan governor of Momien, explanatory of the pacific purposes of his journey and bespeaking his aid. No information could be obtained of any route across the hills save one, and recourse was had to the Kakhyen chief of Ponlyne, through whose district this road led by the northern bank of the Tapeng river, which flows through the hills, joining the Irrawaddy at Bhamo. He engaged to provide mules and escort the party safely to Manwyne, the first town in the valleys inhabited by a Shan population. It was uncertain whether these Shan states would prove favourable to the progress of the expedition, or how far they had become subject to the Mohammedan Chinese. It was known that the latter had established a sort of government under an elected emperor, who resided at the ancient and holy city of Tali-fu. It might be expected that he and his people would gladly assist in re-opening direct trade with Burmah, and Major Sladen relied on the effect of his letters to secure a welcome, and an escort, if needed, through the intervening valleys to Momien. Bhamo was left February 26th, and the fifteen miles of plain extending to the base of the hills were soon traversed. At Tsitkaw, the point of departure for the hills, the avaricious and faithless nature of the half-savage Kakhyens already began to show itself, but after various delays and difficulties the hills were entered on March 2nd, and on the 6th, after toiling up and down rugged mountain tracks, ascending to a height of three thousand five hundred feet, the party encamped at

a Kakhyen mountain village called Ponsee.

The next day the mulemen drove off all their mules, and left the expedition stranded without any means of further progress. It would of course have been possible to retreat, leaving the valuable baggage a prey to the highlanders, but Major Sladen decided on a policy of expectant patience. In this he was soon encouraged by the return of his messengers from Momien with letters and glowing accounts of their cordial reception by the Mohammedan governor. The detention of the party in their camp on the Ponsee hill-side lasted till May 11th. During this period the Kakhyen chiefs, especially he of Ponlyne, tried by every imaginable form of menace, cajolery, and pretended plans of assistance to extract rupees; they cut off supplies, and invented or reported all sorts of rumours of combinations on the part of Shans, Chinese, and even Burmese to destroy the whole party. The Blamo people, influenced by the Chinese merchants, undoubtedly did all they could to embarrass us. The Panthays were told that the English really meant to drive them out of their territory; the Shans that their country was to be conquered. The governor of Momien, however, was convinced of the sincerity of our purpose, and took the field in person to drive Li-see-thai from his stronghold and clear the way for our advance. By his influence the Shans were brought to assist the party, and after all expectations of progress seemed to have faded away, and some members of the expedition had returned to Mandalay, the three remaining travellers found themselves *en route* for Manwyne. Doubtless there had been a narrow escape from attack. Some of the Kakhyens had even killed a bullock, and, dipping their swords in its blood, had sworn to fall on the camp by night, but dissensions among themselves and a wholesome fear of fifty muskets averted the danger. The two months' detention converted all these savage hill-men into friends, at least they acquired a conviction that it *paid better* to serve than to

thwart or attack an Englishman. It is true that even the liberality and consideration shown to them cannot be said to have transformed them all into steadfast, trustworthy allies, but a great advance was certainly made in winning their confidence, as subsequent events have shown. Descending from the Kakhyen hills the explorers entered on a very different scene.

The long narrow valley, stretching between walls of lofty mountains, down which the Tapeng flowed through its successive Shan states of Muangle, Sanda, and Manwyne, delighted the eye with its natural beauty. The industrious and thriving population received the visitors everywhere with cordial welcome. Signs of the devastating war, which had not spared even these remote towns, were not wanting. Breached walls, roofless houses, and ruined temples told the tale of civil strife, exasperated by religious prejudice, but the valley was still smiling with cultivation and teeming with busy life. Perhaps the change from the monotony of mountains and dirty scowling Kakhyens, made the fertile valley, and the good-humoured Shans seem more attractive than they other wise would have done, but most pleasant was our intercourse with them, both on the upward and return journey, as well in the Sanda valley as in the adjacent state of Hotha, occupying a parallel valley to the southwards. The result was a conviction that no obstacle to trade or travel would arise from the people or the chiefs of the Shan states tributary to China, if uninfluenced by *hostile advisers*. For it became quite clear that after debouching from the Kakhyen hills the traveller is really in the empire of China, at least within its normal boundaries. These Shan states were each ruled by its patriarchal tsawbwa or chief, but each paid a yearly tribute and obeyed the governor of Momien.

In fact, a stream which, down a deep glen, forced its way through the Kakhyen hills to the Tapeng, is the ancient boundary between Burmah and China. This stream, named the Nam-poung, was crossed before reaching

Ponsee. Beginning with Manwyne, a considerable and increasing Chinese element showed itself in the population, and the fact was borne in on us gradually, but strongly, that both to the north and to the south of the Tapeng the boundary between the two countries ran but a few miles distant from the Irrawaddy valley. The Kakhyens themselves, though practically independent highlanders, living in clans, and, like true highlanders, ready to quarrel with, and plunder each other, or any one else, are fully sensible of their position, as living either on Burmese or Chinese ground. Manwyne itself was then a sort of no-man's-land, filled with a lawless rabble of refugees and rowdies, but of the towns next in order a separate Chinese quarter existed in each until Muangla was passed. From this point the road left the valley of the Tapeng, and ascended that of its affluent, the Taho, flowing down from the hills north-east of Momien. In the next Shan state of Muangtee, two closely neighbouring towns—Muangtee and Nantin—were respectively occupied by Shans and Chinese. From this, till Momien itself was reached, the country had been too plainly desolated by war. Ruined villages and neglected rice-fields told of past industry, but now only of robbers. The broken fugitives of the Chinese Imperialist armies seemed to haunt the hill-sides of the deserted valleys. We did not escape an attack, though escorted by a strong guard of Mohammedan soldiers from Nantin, which was garrisoned by them. And two of the Panthay officers fell victims to their friendship for the English visitors. It is well to add that the Indian Government recognized their services by a pecuniary grant to their families. The paved road carried over stone-bridges polished by incessant traffic, and even occasional iron suspension-bridges, was almost deserted. And when Momien was at last reached, the city walls contained but a few houses, tenanted by the Mohammedan authorities and their soldiery.

This lofty valley, at a height of nearly 6,000 feet above the sea, and surrounded by mountains, had once been literally crowded with inhabitants. Around the city itself lay a ring of large villages—only the graveyards on the hill-slopes and the deserted ruins now remaining to bear witness to their former populousness. The numerous temples had been sacked by Moslem intolerance, although the extensive ruins still showed abundant traces of the wealth and devotion of the founders and worshippers. The scanty remains of the Chinese population occupied a walled bazaar outside the city gate, but all were poverty-stricken, and numbers were mere beggars. Outside the walls, robbers infested the ruins, and their presence was manifested by continual alarms, and frequent executions of so-called dacoits, who had made reprisals on their conquerors. It was absolutely unsafe to venture half a mile without a strong guard; and a visit to the hills was impossible. Nothing, however, could exceed the cordial welcome and the thoughtful hospitality extended by Tasakone the governor to his guests. The Panthays, naturally fraternised with the Mohammedan policemen of the escort, and the tedium of the stay from May 26 to July 13, during which period it rained almost incessantly, was relieved as far as possible by the kindness of the good-natured Panthay officials. There was, however, no possibility of advancing to Yungchang, the centre of trade, or to Tali-fu, the seat of the Mohammedan kingdom.

It was a strange coincidence that at this very time Mr. Cooper was endeavouring to reach Tali from the north, and Garnier and his companions from the Cambodia. The capture of Yun-nan⁵ fu, the capital of the province, was announced; but the constant fighting, and the numerous detached bands of Imperialist soldiery, rendered it impossible to do more than send forward to Tali-fu the presents brought for the purpose. The king, Suleyman, sent letters of greeting, and promises of a mission to Rangoon, when possible; while the governor him-

self eagerly entered into the arrangements for future commercial intercourse, and promised that the duties to be levied should not be exorbitant.

Returning from Momien, the party retraced their steps to Manwyne, having spent some days in familiar intercourse with the Shans of Sanda. From Manwyne a new line of return was adopted. Crossing the Tapeng and the southern border mountain, we descended into the valley of the Hotha Shans, and travelled along the embassy road, by which in olden times the Burmese embassies had passed to the Flowery Land, and so regained the Burmese plain through the Kakhyen hills, south of the Tapeng.

These highlanders appeared superior to their countrymen of Ponsee, especially within the Chinese frontier; and the only delays on the journey were caused by the pertinacious hospitality of chiefs, who thought nothing of guiding their visitors a mile or two out of the way, and over an extra mountain or so to gain the honour of entertaining them for a night. The Kakhyen chiefs from these southern hills, commanding the embassy road, to the number of thirty-one, followed us to Bhamo, and at a grand sacrificial ceremony held in September, twelve took oaths of fidelity and friendship, according to their most solemn and binding form; and with this interesting ceremony, the expedition of 1868 may be said to have terminated.

And now what results had been attained? Thanks to the patience and determination of the leader, almost all had returned in safety, with the loss of only two, a sepoy and a native zoological collector, who had succumbed to disease. Friendly relations had been established between English visitors, and the successive populations, viz. the Kakhyen of the hills, the Shans of the valleys, and the Mohammedan Chinese of Yunnan. It is not the place here to speak of additions to our stock of ethnological and physical knowledge, but it had been distinctly proved, partly by our own personal exploration, and partly by the report of a Burmese surveyor detached for the purpose, that

three usual and available routes lead from Bhamo to Momien, all passing through the territory of the Kakhyens, who derive profits from the hire of carriage, and from dues accustomed to be paid to the chiefs. The northern route traversed in the outward journey is the most difficult. The central embassy route partly traversed in the return, ranks next in facility, but the easiest, although longest, is the road which, starting from Sawaddy, a village on the river, below Bhamo, leads through lower hills to Muangmou, and thence turns to the north east to Nantin, at the latter place all the three lines of communication converge, and from thence the Chinese high road leads to Momien. By the latter route it was gathered that most of such traffic as then existed was conveyed. That no great engineering difficulties would occur to prevent the formation of a good hill road through the Kakhyen county was proved by the report of Mr. Gordon, who joined the expedition on its return journey at Muangla; but the road over high hills, or along valleys, through friendly Shans or greedy highlanders could only lead to a province devastated by war, where the conquering rebels ruled over a people, politically and religiously hostile.

The Panthays were ready enough to welcome English traders or travellers, but they could not secure the roads, nor were the natural prejudices of the Chinese likely to be lessened by the spectacle of friendly intercourse between those whom they esteemed rebels and the foreigners. If the march of events had established a settled and peaceful Mohammedan kingdom, the good results achieved by Major Sladen would have borne abundant fruit.

It may, however, be briefly said, that the objects of the exploration, in verifying the reports as to lines of communication between Burmah and China, in investigating the political relations of the population, and the physical features of the country; and last, but not least, in conciliating the various chiefs, and their subjects to whom English-

men were then first made known, were fully attained. With that consciousness, the leader of the expedition which went and returned in 1863 can console himself for the absence of any recognition of his services.

An immediate outcome of the work done was the establishment of an English assistant political agent at Bhamo. A handsome residence was erected outside the town, and a succession of British residents have since maintained the then acquired influence of the British flag, and from this distant outpost, two hundred miles from any countrymen, watched the prospects and interests of trade.

During the next few years the state of Yunnan continued to be that of internecine warfare, but the desultory efforts of the Imperialist Chinese were at last exchanged for more active hostility. It is probable that the Government of Peking discovered the truth that their high officials were embezzling the funds supposed to be devoted to suppressing the rebellion. Perhaps too the news that the Panthays began to hope for English support, awoke the slow-going Chinese mind to the necessity of prompt and resolute action.

In May, 1872, Prince Hassan, son of the Mohammedan king, made his way to Rangoon, and thence proceeded to London with a retinue and presents, in the hope of obtaining at least a recognition of his father's government as *de facto* existing. In this the prince was necessarily disappointed. He was, however, treated as a private guest of the government, and remained in England until August. During his stay Mr. T. T. Cooper, the Chinese traveller, was introduced to him, and was requested by him to accompany him to Talifu. Her Majesty's Government commissioned Mr. Cooper to escort the Prince to the frontier of British Burmah, from whence he would proceed to Tali as a guest of the Mohammedan king. Meanwhile, the Chinese had poured masses of troops into Yunnan, and invested Talifu; and when Prince Hassan and Mr. Cooper reached

Rangoon, they received the news that Talifu had been captured and the Mohammedan king killed. The Panthay power was thus broken, and the merciless extermination of the Mohammedans completed the ruin of the province of Yunnan, though Momien and other strongholds held out till the following year.

Order, however, was gradually restored. The Chinese authorities were reinstated, and Li-see-thai in reward for his fidelity, was appointed Governor of the Chinese Shan States, the Shans themselves gladly welcoming the restoration of the old *régime*. Trade slowly resumed its former channels, though continual disturbances, the flashes from the dying embers of the civil war, broke out here and there. The Hon. A. Eden, Chief Commissioner of Burmah, earnestly desired to make a fresh attempt to open communications between Bhamo and China, and prepare the way for English merchants and travellers. The difficulty of a rebellious province, entrance into which, by our treaty, was prohibited, no longer existed, and with the consent of the Government of Peking, a gold and silver road might be opened through the very centre of China. In 1874 Lord Salisbury decided to send a second expedition to penetrate China from Burmah, and exploring the routes for commerce, pass through, if practicable, to Shanghai.

To avoid possible misunderstanding, and to make it plain to the Western Chinese Mandarins that the foreign visitors were of the same nation as the English, who lived and traded in the treaty ports, her Britannic Majesty's Minister at Peking was instructed to send a Consular official with Imperial passports to meet the party entering from Burmah.

Having secured the full permission of the Peking Government, Mr. Wade selected Mr. Margary, a young but most promising member of the Consular Service, to make the journey across China, and await the expedition at Momien, and he started from Shanghai September 4, 1874. The appointed

leader, Colonel Brown, and some other members of the party, with a guard of fifteen Sikhs, and valuable presents, left Mandalay in January 1875. The king of Burmah had accorded a splendid reception to the mission. Royal officials and elephants awaited our landing, a solid silver dinner service was provided for our use, and we were declared to be the king's guests till we entered China. Daily poays, or theatrical entertainments, were given. Nothing was left undone to show that the king delighted to honour the members of the mission, whom he received in audience before our departure, on which occasion he expressed himself in most friendly terms. The voyage up the river was marked by the same manifestation of feeling. At every town and village the officials had prepared a festive reception. The women were ranged in rows, dancing and singing Burmese fashion, to amuse the strangers. On January 15th Bhamo was reached, the moon coming to meet the steamer with a large escort of war-boats, and showing the most kindly thoughtfulness for our accommodation.

As a set-off to all this outward display of goodwill, there had not been wanting rumours and confidential statements that the king really wished the very opposite of success to the mission. Mandalay, however, is beyond all capitals a prolific breeding-ground for *canards*. The king, being centre and head of everything—trade included—is frequently represented as uttering opinions which only exist in the imaginations of those who repeat them. There is an *entourage* of European adventurers who seem to delight in misrepresenting the king to foreigners, and foreigners to the king; and as the groundless stories and rumours, once propagated, are apt to fly until they find place in the columns of newspapers, much mischief thereby results. The king of Burmah is an intelligent monarch, well acquainted with English and Indian affairs. He may not bear any great affection to the nation that holds the fairest half of his ancestral kingdom, but he knows their power; and though,

naturally, he may not relish interference, he is not unwilling to encourage commercial intercourse, being himself, indeed, the principal merchant in his kingdom. While reading much of the "own correspondent" statements and comments thereon, touching Burmese affairs, one could not help recalling the fable of the "Wolf and the Lamb," and thinking that the writers were anxious to see an illustration of it, with the Upper Irrawaddy as the stream which the lamb rendered unfit for use, before the waters flowed down to the wolf.

At Bhamo, Mr. Ney Elias was awaiting the arrival of the Mission, and on the 17th, to the delight of all, Mr. Margary arrived, having come from Momien by Sanda and Manwyne. His progress through Kweichau and Yunnan had been most successful. The Mandarins had received him as if he had been a high Chinese dignitary. The acting Viceroy of Yunnan showed himself "unexpected ally and friend," and sent two Mandarins to escort him, and also forwarded despatches to the frontier towns to prepare for the reception of the mission. He had even been permitted to enter Tali, and found the people civil; while the Tartar general had been so won by the manner and accomplishments of his English visitor as to promise to invite the mission to stay for a few days in Talifu. At Manwyne he met Li-see-thai, who paid him marked respect, and this in the presence of Kakhien chiefs and Shan notables. There is a sad interest in the account given in his private letters of his stay at this place. The gallant young Englishman, fully versed in Chinese language and etiquette, who was the first of his nation to traverse China, might well excite the interest of the Manwyne chiefs and people. His stay there is summed up in his own words in a letter dated Manwyne, January 13th:—"I come and go without meeting the slightest rudeness among this charming people." Little more than a month elapsed before he was treacherously murdered at that very place! His report of the condition of the provinces of Kweichau and Yunnan, especially the latter, fully con-

firmed the opinions expressed by Mr. Cooper and others.

The ravages of the Miautze, or hill-men, who availed themselves of the opportunity afforded by the Mohammedan rebellion, have desolated Kweichau, as the civil war has laid waste Yunnan. Everywhere the cities are reduced to mere villages, and the villages to collections of mere straw huts. The devoted cities remain as cities of the dead, with extensive walls surrounding acres of ruins. The fine valleys of Yunnan are given up to rank grass, and ruined villages and neglected fields attest the former prosperity. "Every day," writes Mr. Margary, half-way between Yunnan and Talifu, "I come to what was once a busy city, now only containing a few houses, within walls which surrounded a wide space of ruins. The people are returning gradually. The blue smoke can be seen curling up here and there against the pine-clad hills; but it must take some few years to re-people the country, rich as it is." This is the picture of the once richest province of China, drawn by the first Englishman who traversed the trade route of the future.

But this is anticipating the tragic end to which all preparations to go forward from Bhamo were tending. The Resident, Captain Cooke, and Mr. Ney Elias had arranged for the mission to proceed by the Sawaddy route, through the district of the Lenna Kakhyens, thence by the Chinese Shan States of Muangmow and Sehfan, in the valley of the Shuaylee river, to Momien. This, though much longer, was considered a far easier route, and possessed the recommendation of opening up a new country. The Paloungtoo, a Lenna chief, had agreed to furnish pack bullocks, and escort the party to the first town in Muangmow State.

The Burmese woon recommended the embassy route, but cheerfully gave all aid to carry out the plan proposed. A numerous Burmese guard was assembled, the royal order being that the mission was to be safely escorted to the Chinese frontier line. Difficulties arose

with the Kakhyen chief after the baggage had been partly arranged for transit at Sawaddy. The Kakhyens could not restrain their pilfering propensities, and there seemed some doubt as to the consent of all the chiefs on the proposed line of march. It subsequently appeared that the main difficulty was the concealed objection of the chiefs to the presence of the Burmese. And the same chiefs loyally escorted Messrs. Cooke and Elias through their territories to Muangmow.

Colonel Brown decided to advance by the route traversed by the former expedition, through Ponlyne and Ponsee to Manwyne. The Burmese, though not approving, at once cordially co-operated, and sent out to the Kakhyen chiefs for our mules, a sufficient number of which were soon collected at Tsitkaw.

February 17th saw the long array of laden mules toiling up the stony ruts that are called roads in the Kakhyen Hills. Fifty Burmese soldiers, commanded by a Tsaredawgyee, or royal writer, escorted the party, together with the fifteen Sikhs, who brought up the rear. Successive Burmese guard-houses, each occupied by a small party of soldiers, were passed, a regular chain having been established from the foot of the hills to the Nampoung, or the boundary stream which divides Burmah from China.

Ominous reports soon began to be brought in. Several hundred evil-disposed Kakhyens and Chinese robbers had banded themselves together at Manwyne to attack us in the hills; but the authority for these rumours was doubtful, and it was resolved to go forward to the glen of the Nampoung, and encamp on the Burmese bank of the stream. Hence, Colonel Brown decided that Margary should go forward to Manwyne and ascertain the real state of affairs; and on the 19th of February he started, accompanied by his Chinese writer and servants, without any apprehension of danger, so great was the confidence engendered by his previous reception at that town.

The following day a letter arrived

from him, written from Seray, a Kakhyen hill village, on the way to Manwyne, announcing that all was quiet, and the people had been civil.

The march was at once resumed, the Nampoung was crossed, and the mission, still escorted by the Burmese guard, though now in Chinese territory, climbed the eastern slopes and encamped on the Sheetee Merroo Hill, at an elevation of 5,000 feet above the sea. Next morning the leader was anxious to proceed, but the Burmese requested him to await news of Margary's safe arrival at Manwyne. Men were seen hovering on the upper heights. The Burmese threw up earthworks across the road, in front and rear. That same evening the Burmese officer reported that an attack would certainly take place that night or the ensuing day, and his men constructed a rough breast-work. Our position was surrounded by heights and jungle, save to the west, where a steep descent led down to the Nampoung valley.

All were astir at daylight on the 22nd. Large bodies of men appeared on the heights, and hurried down to the south-east of our position, so as to occupy the road in our rear. The Burmese posted guards on the road leading to Seray, and drew a cordon round on all sides but one. Soon their officer came, with grave face, and exhibiting letters from Manwyne, announced the terrible news of the murder of poor Margary, and with him his writer and servants. There was little time to grieve, or to consult, for the invisible enemy opened fire from the jungle on all sides but the west, but chiefly from the south. The Sikhs took up a position covered by a huge boulder, and opened fire, whenever the enemy showed themselves, with fatal effect; the Burmese also briskly returned the fire.

The Burmese officer had been warned of the attack in the letters from Manwyne, and advised to keep out of harm's way; but he and his men loyally adhered to their trust. He displayed a cool presence of mind throughout the day. The mules and drivers retreated

into a hollow where they were secure. Two Kakhyen Tsawbwaw, Woonkah and Sheetee, brought in men to assist us, and remained all day. By two o'clock the firing ceased, and the enemy retreated. The mules were got ready for a start, when the foe returned, at least five hundred strong, and opened a hot fire from the heights and jungle, and our position appeared likely to become untenable. A diversion was shortly effected by the faithful Kakhyens, who made their way below the enemy to the south, and fired the jungle, an operation which was repeated till the assailants, deprived of cover, made off along the ridges, acquiring as they ran an unpleasant knowledge of the long range of rifles. By five o'clock all firing had ceased, the baggage was promptly loaded, willing Kakhyens eagerly assisting, and was soon on its way to Sheetee. Our return was effected unmolested, the Burmese doing all in their power to secure the safety of all. Save one of their number and a servant, both slightly wounded, no one was hurt, and the baggage was eventually brought intact to Bhamo.

Nothing would have been easier than for the Burmese to have deserted their charge; but from first to last they displayed a zealous fidelity beyond all praise. It is strange if the services rendered by the Tsaredawgyee pass unrequited, and yet not so strange, seeing that the Burmese have been accused of at least conniving at the attack. Besides our grief at the death of Mr. Margary, who during our short intercourse had endeared himself to all, great anxiety was felt for the safety of Ney Elias. He and Captain Cooke had preceded by the Irrawaddy route to Muangmow—the suspected Kakhyens had behaved admirably—the lavish hospitality of the Lenna chiefs literally franking the travellers through the hills.

At Muangmow they had found Lisee-thai, who had received them courteously. He had expected the whole Mission to come by that route, and apparently gone there to meet it. In order to enable Elias to proceed more quickly, Captain Cooke returned to Bhamo.

On the 17th Elias was still at Muang-mow, Li-see-thai having declared it unsafe for him to proceed through Sehfan, as there was fighting on the road. This had been the last news, and we dreaded to hear that he had shared the fate of Mr. Margary. Letters, however, dated two days previously, reached Bhamo on the 26th, reassuring us of Elias's safety up to that time. Li-see-thai had asked him to wait and he would see if he could send him on into the regions ruled by Mandarins; but at last declared that it was out of his power to secure the Englishman's safety through the turbulent state of Sehfan, and Mr. Elias returned safely to Bhamo.

It is impossible to avoid the reflection that the Chinese officer, had he been so minded, could have let the traveller advance to certain death, and that without any apparent complicity. The Chinese Shans of Muangmow were certainly not friendly disposed, though no overt act of hostility occurred; but the purloining of Mr. Elias's note-book marked their dislike to foreigners obtaining a knowledge of their country. It may be remarked that no particulars of Mr. Margary's murder are given. No authentic or trustworthy account could

be obtained whether he fell a victim to the robbers and assassins of that turbulent frontier town, who feared interference with their intended plunder, or to the organized hostility of the Chinese merchants.

This brief but perhaps tedious account is not an indictment of the Chinese; although one cannot help remarking that Li-see-thai, as governor of the Shan states, could certainly bring to justice the guilty parties, unless they had been instigated and screened by officials superior to himself. If by their punishment it be established that a peaceful English traveller or trader shall hereafter pass unmolested through the Shan valleys, though for years the fancied commerce may be still only an unrealised vision, the gallant young Margary will not have died in vain.

No towering pagoda, or simpler monument, may rise on the spot where he fell, to tell the wondering natives that England never forgets her heroes; but, what he would more have desired, the opening to commerce of a secure trade route between Burmah and China, which has now become a national duty, will keep his memory green.

JOHN ANDERSON, M.D.

LONDON, *Se'entler*, 1875.



END OF VOLUME XXXII.

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